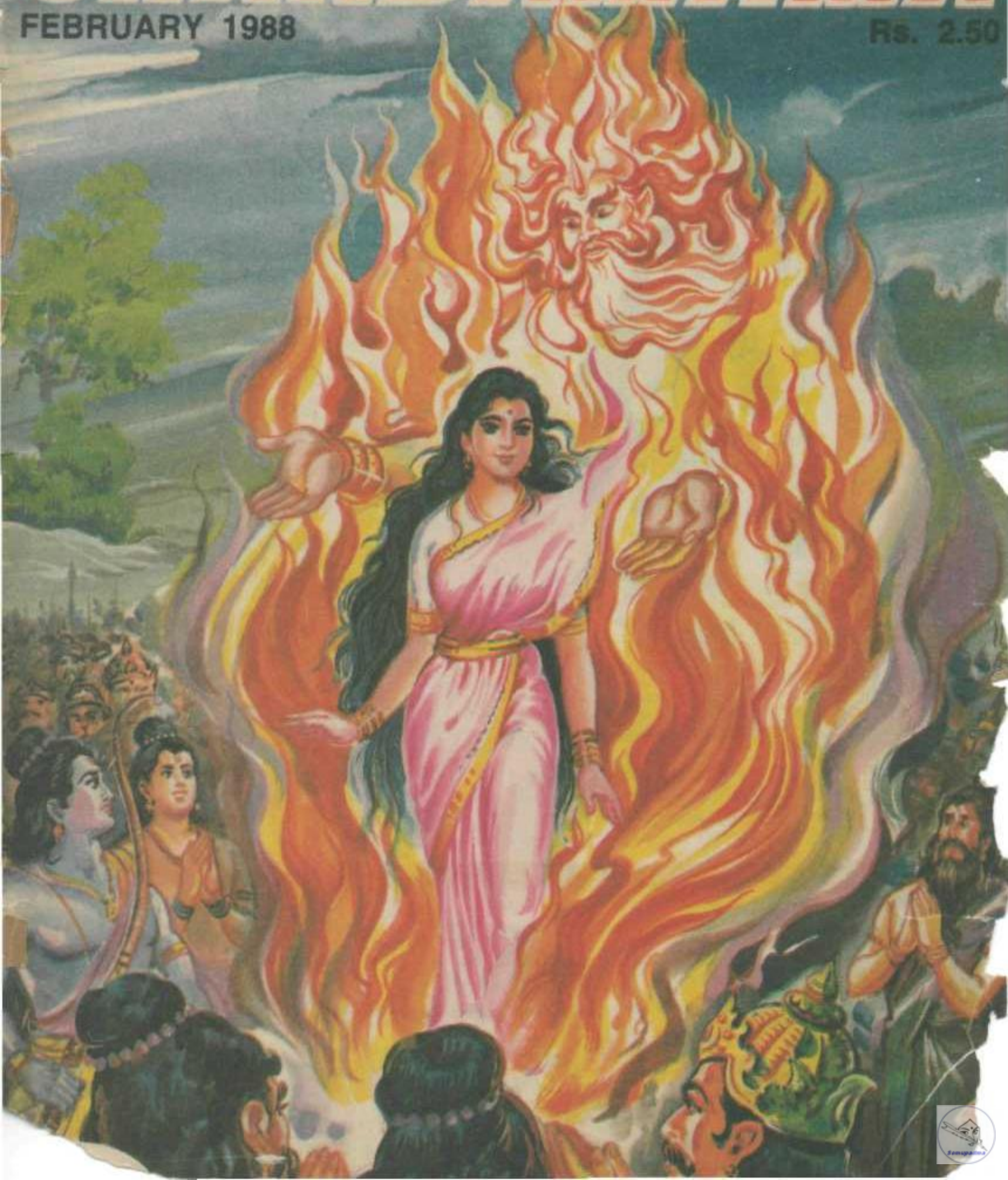


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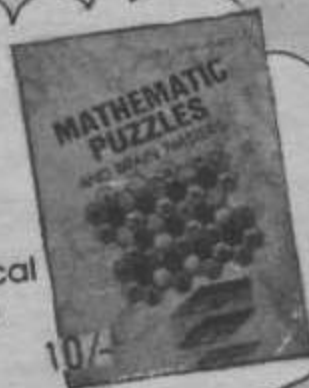
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pictures.

- * TENALI RAMA Strikes again! Once again the indefatigable jester has a prank to enact. Presented through pictures.
- * A bunch of delightful stories and Towards better English, Let us Know, Did you know? and all the other features.



GOLDEN WORDS OF YORE

दूरेऽपि परस्यागसि पटुर्जनो नात्मनः समीपेऽपि ।

स्वं व्रणमक्षि न पश्यति शशिनि कलङ्कं निरूपयति ॥

Dure'pi parasyāgasi paṭurjano natmanah samīpe'pi

Svam vranamaksi na paśyati śaśini kalaṅkaṁ nirūpayati

There are people who are adept in detecting faults of those who are even far away from them, just as the eye is able to perceive black spots on the moon but not a boil in itself.

— Subhasitaratnabhandagaram

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Controlling Editor:
NAGI REDDI
Founder:
CHAKRAPANI

LET IT BE AN AID TO YOUR CONFIDENCE

Our readers must have seen the feature on First Aid that began in the last issue. We are sure, the series will be of great practical help to the young. As excursions and adventures are on the increase among our students, they must be prepared to face an occasional problem into which one of them may fall. As a wise doctor said, faith in God and prayers to Him are the best safeguards, the second is sobriety mixed with caution. The third is immediate help in a danger. The First Aid is the science of immediate help.

Thoughts to be Treasured

Not all our gold and jewellery could satisfy our hunger and quench our thirst.

—Mahatma Gandhi

NEWS FLASH

PEACE DOVES

Thousands of people from all over the world have written messages to the leaders of the Soviet Union and the USA giving their vision of a world in which they would like to live.

Nearly 250,000 letters, part of a "peace dove" campaign, ask the leaders to start wide ranging disarmament.



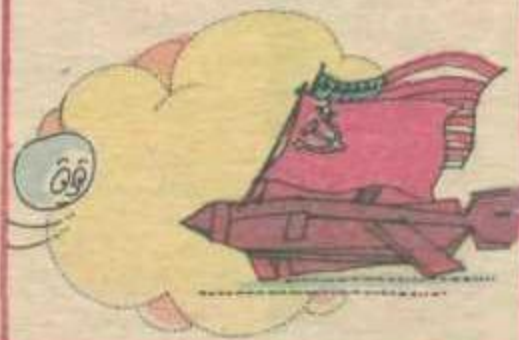
THE SWEET SWEET TOWER

Uwe Richart stands near a model of the Eiffel Tower which he has made entirely out of sugar for a hotel in Kuala Lumpur where he is working. He spent 80 hours to make the 2.43 metre-high model out of 48 kg of sugar.

MISSION TO MARS

The Soviet leader, Mr. Mikhail Gorbachev, proposed that the USA and the Soviet Union join forces on a manned expedition to Mars.

Ms. Karen Mulhauser, founder of Women for a Meaningful Summit, said Mr. Gorbachev made the suggestion at a meeting yesterday with prominent Americans following two sessions at the White House.



GUESTS IN THE GARDEN

They have arrived at Nandan Kanan, near Bhubaneswar. There are two chimpanzees, one baboon, three monkeys, three marmosets, two small kangaroos and three cavys in the group. The second group of 13 animals from Texas is expected to land there in a couple of months. Under an exchange agreement, the Nandan Kanan authorities will, in return, send a pair of white tigers to Texas.



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"Hey kids! Have you had your Caramilk today?"



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DID YOU KNOW?



The Himalayan geese are the highest flying birds. They can fly at a height of 29,000 feet.

You cannot say when a snake sleeps, for it never shuts its eyes! It has no eyelids. A glass-like thin layer protects its eye-balls.



A report in the *Scientific America* of 12-7-1873 says: "A shower of frog which darkened the air and covered the ground for a long distance is the reported result of a recent rain-storm in Kansas City "

In May 1850 occurred a strange hailstorm in a village named Condwal, six miles from Satara in Maharashtra. According to the *Bombay Telegraph* (21-5-1850), the hailstones were as large as coconuts. Houses fell and cattle were destroyed.



The camel's backbone is perfectly straight.

The elephant is the only animal with four knees.



STORY OF

RAMA



—By Manoj Das

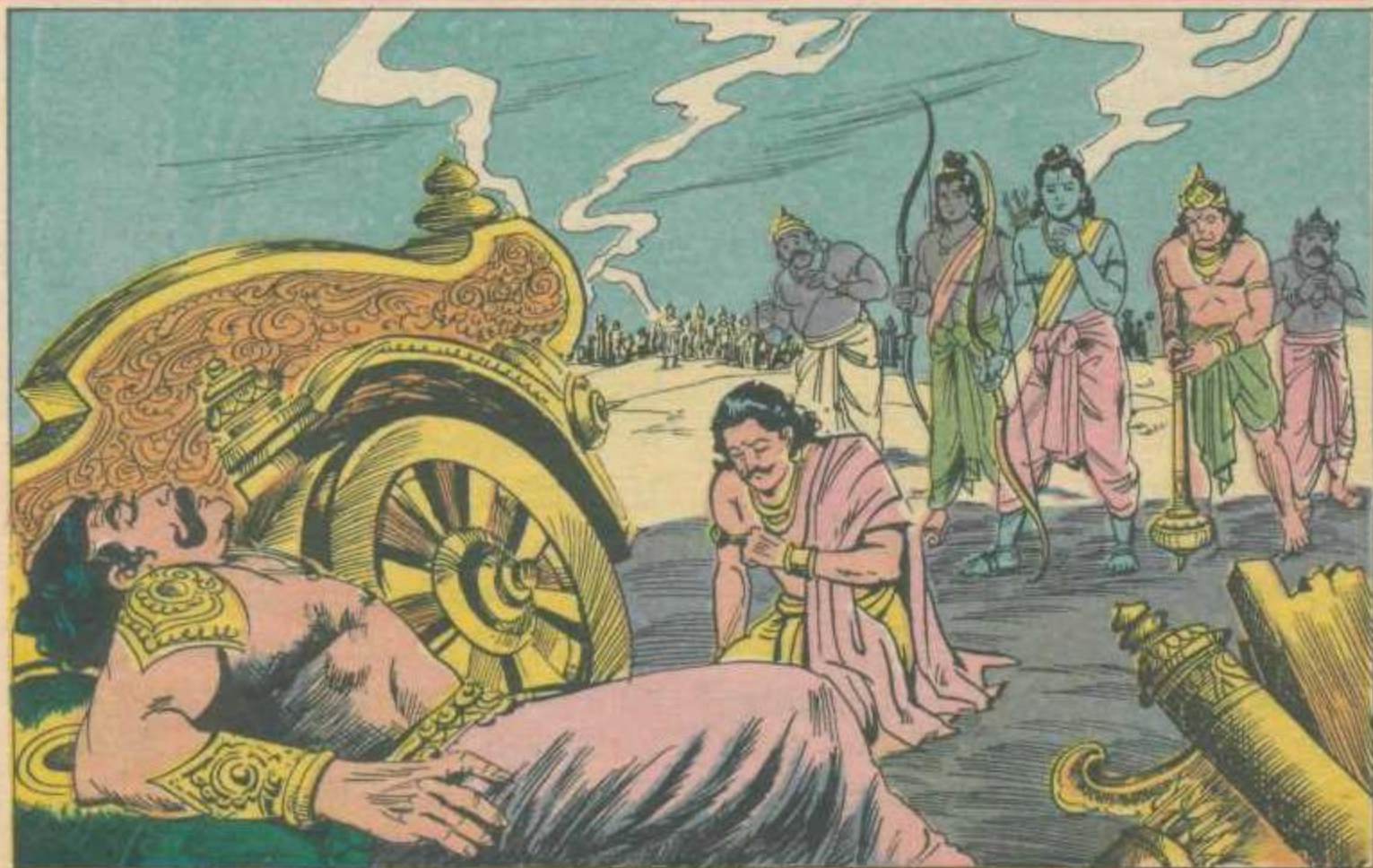
(Rama's mission in quest of Sita was accomplished when Hanuman located her in Lanka. The next phase of Rama's action was to rescue her and avenge Ravana's mischief. He invaded Ravana's golden fort and in an eventful battle, finally killed Ravana.)

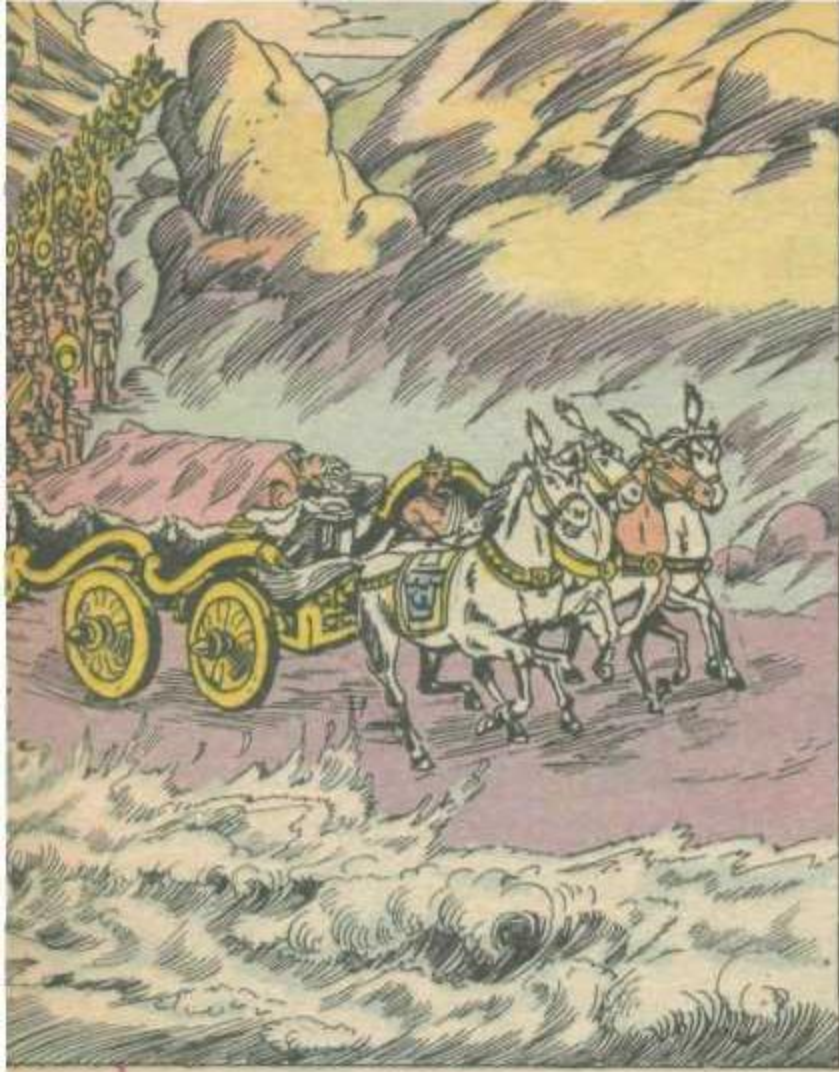
SITA: GLORIOUS THAN EVER

A weird silence prevailed over the battlefield and the fort. Not only many of the demons took time to realise that their king whom they had taken to be invincible, was dead, but also the Vanara soldiers of Rama could not be immediately sure of it. The demon-king was a

great wizard. Who knows if he would not rise from his fall once again? Did it not happen that several times, when his head was cut off, a new head popped up?

But then the truth became clear for all—and very soon —when Vibhishana wept over





his brother's dead body. "O Mighty King!" he said addressing his brother's spirit, "with your departure, Lanka has become totally devoid of heroes. How wonderful was our island! Only if you had paid heed to my counsel, you could have lived a long life and ruled in peace. Alas! That was not to be!"

Now, while loud wails were heard inside the fort, the Vanaras began celebrating their victory with cheers and jumps.

"Vibhishana!" said Rama, "you must now go into Ravana's castle and console the inmates, the females in particular, and assure them that no harm shall

come to them. Thereafter we must arrange for Ravana's cremation—with all the honour due to a great king. After all, he has given his life fighting till the last moment, knowing fully well that he was fighting a losing battle."

Ravana's body was carried in a golden carriage to the southern seashore. Covered with stacks of sandalwood and a variety of incense, it was consigned to flames. The weeping demonesses and kinsmen looked on as Vibhishana performed Ravana's funeral rites.

"Now, it is necessary that Vibhishana should be crowned the King of Lanka. Thereafter, with his permission, Hanuman can enter the fort and find out and inform Sita of our victory," Rama told Lakshmana.

That was not a time for any pomp and show. Lakshmana sprinkled the sacred sea-water on Vibhishana's head and briefly performed the other rituals. Vibhishana was pronounced the king.

As instructed by Rama, Hanuman obtained Vibhishana's permission and entered the fort and reached the Asoka garden in a few bounds. The

demonesses guarding Sita were still there, but looked as pale as dead! At the sight of Hanuman they slunk away and stood at some distance, blinking, fear writ large on their faces.

"O Mother, my master, Rama, has at last vanquished your wicked captor. Ravana has paid for his pride and audacity. I am sent by my lord, Rama, to give you this great news," said Hanuman.

Sita stood speechless with joy. Wiping her tears, she said, "O Hanuman, even if I could make you the monarch over all the three spheres of Creation, that would be hardly a fitting

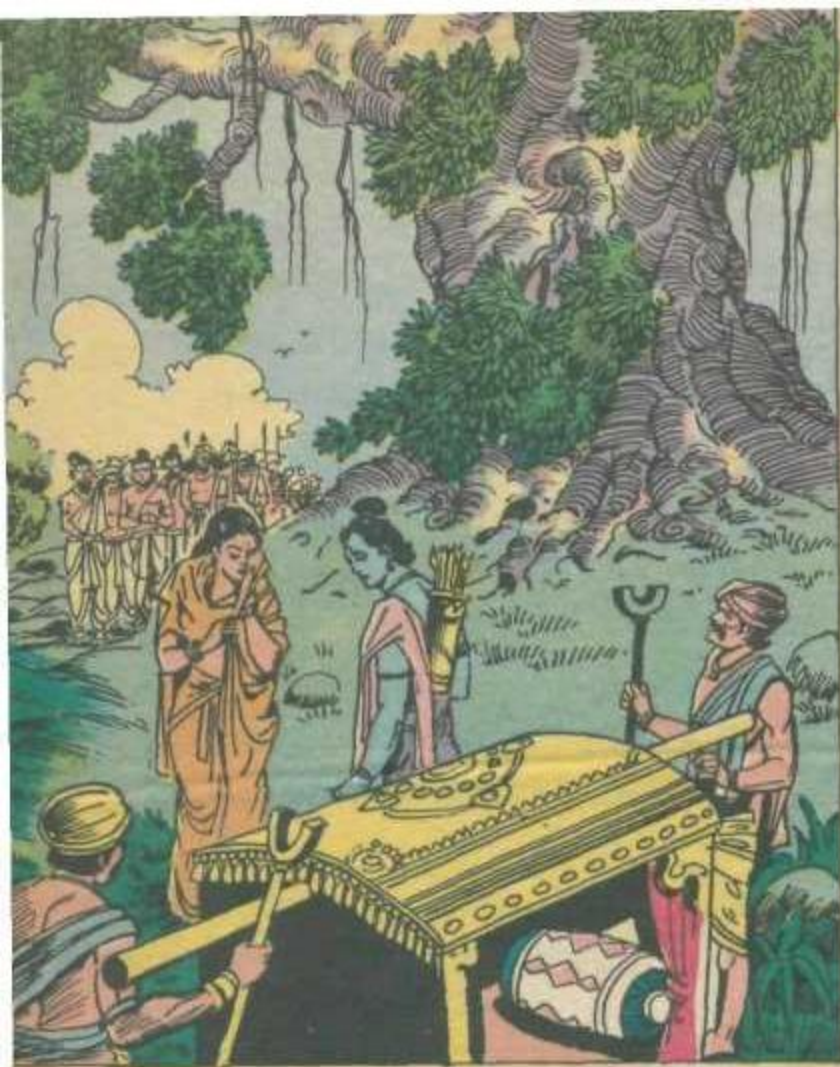
reward for the tidings you have brought me. Such is my joy at this moment. Now, kindly go back to my husband and tell him how eager I am to see him."

"But, before I depart, Mother, please permit me to tear asunder these female brutes who used to threaten you and harassed you," said Hanuman showing his finger at the scared demonesses trying to hide themselves from him.

"No, O Hanuman, they are not to blame for anything. They only obeyed their wicked master's orders. Leave them in peace."

Hanuman bowed to Sita and





went back to Rama and said, "My master, she for whom we undertook this great adventure is safe. It is time that she meets you!"

Suddenly Rama grew pensive. His eyes were moistened. To a surprised Vibhishana, he said, "All right, please arrange to bring her here."

Soon Sita was ushered in, seated in a bejewelled palanquin. At Vibhishana's instruction his lieutenants began to drive the crowd of Vanaras and demons away as if they were unworthy of Sita's sight. This annoyed Rama and he asked Vibhishana to look upon all of

them as his friends.

Sita emerged from the palanquin and stood before Rama. She then unveiled her face marked by tears and smiles, bearing the effect of days of sorrow and, at the same time, bright with joy. Naturally, she expected Rama to speak many a kind word to soothe her feeling of anguish. But to everybody's surprise, Rama drew a long face and said, "O Janaki, I have done my duty as a Kshatriya prince. I have put an end to the menace that the wicked demon-king was. Now you are free to go wherever you like. After all, you had been a demon's captive. The people of Ayodhya may not pardon me if I take you as my queen!"

For Sita, this was perhaps a moment of greater anguish than her time in the demon-king's custody. At first bewildered though, she soon gathered her wits and said in a soft but firm voice, "O my husband, it is hard for me to believe that it is you who spoke these words—words that should have fittingly flowed from the mouth of an ordinary and ignorant man. I have no desire to go anywhere. I had not been born of human parents,

but had emerged from the earth taking a human body. I shall abandon that body and depart to the sphere from where I came."

And, looking at Lakshmana, she ordered him to prepare a fire for her to enter it.

For the first ever time in his life, Lakshmana looked at Rama angrily. Then, as if under a spell, he made the fire as ordered by Sita.

A fearful lull prevailed on the scene. Sita, with steady steps, entered the fire. It appeared, the rising flames readily took her into their embrace.

Suddenly the crowd burst into wails and lamentations. But they had to stop as suddenly as they had begun, for from the golden flames was seen rising a dazzling figure. He was the God

of Fire. He held Sita, who now looked like a luminous goddess, in his paternal and protective arm.

"O Rama, here is Sita, pure as the flames, whose thoughts and dreams and hopes have constantly remained focused on you and you alone, swaying never even for a moment. Accept her and be proud of her," the God of Fire told Rama in a resonant voice.

Smiling through tears, Rama said, "O God, I knew the truth; even then I had to bear with her decision to undergo this great test, so that the truth became evident to the world!"

Amidst great rejoicing, Rama took charge of Sita from the God of Fire who blessed them and disappeared in the flames.

—To continue.



ONE-WAY TICKET TO DESTINY

"My brother, find a trustworthy young man for my daughter. You know, I have no son. The young man to marry my daughter will inherit my property. You know what I mean," said Seth Jaikant to his dear friend, Pyarimohan.

"I know, you want me to find a young man who understands the value of money! In plain words, he should be as stingy as yourself," observed Pyarimohan, laughing.

"You call me stingy. I call myself prudent. I want my heir to be equally prudent!" said the Seth.

After a month Pyarimohan wrote to Jaikant informing him that he was sending two young men to him. They had not been told the purpose for which they were being sent, though they are likely to have guessed it. They will be with him for three days. He could detain the one he chose for his would-be son-



B. L. Ram

in-law. They have been told that one of them will be required to stay on.

The two young men, Kumar and Swarup, were duly received by the Seth. He put them up with him for three days. Then he politely told Kumar, "My boy, I understand that both of you are ready to leave tomorrow. Do you mind staying on alone? Swarup can go."

"I don't mind," said Kumar.

Swarup turned to Kumar and said, "My friend, do you now understand why I bought a one-way ticket? I can use yours for

the return journey!"

"What's the matter?" asked the Seth.

The two young men explained the situation. Kumar had bought a return-ticket while Swarup had travelled to the Seth's town on a one-way ticket. Swarup thought that if he is detained, he would not require a ticket for his return journey. If Kumar is detained, he can use Kumar's!

The Seth smiled. Slowly he turned to Kumar and said, "I have changed my mind. Well, you can go, my boy. Swarup can stay on."



YOU TOO CAN LEARN IT

(2)

By Dr. R. Jagannath.

Uncle Ram resumed, with Vinod and Kumud back in their favourite places, "Let us say, you come across someone lying on the wayside after an accident, or as it happened at the beach, someone has been pulled out of the water and lies motionless. What is the first thing you would like to know?"

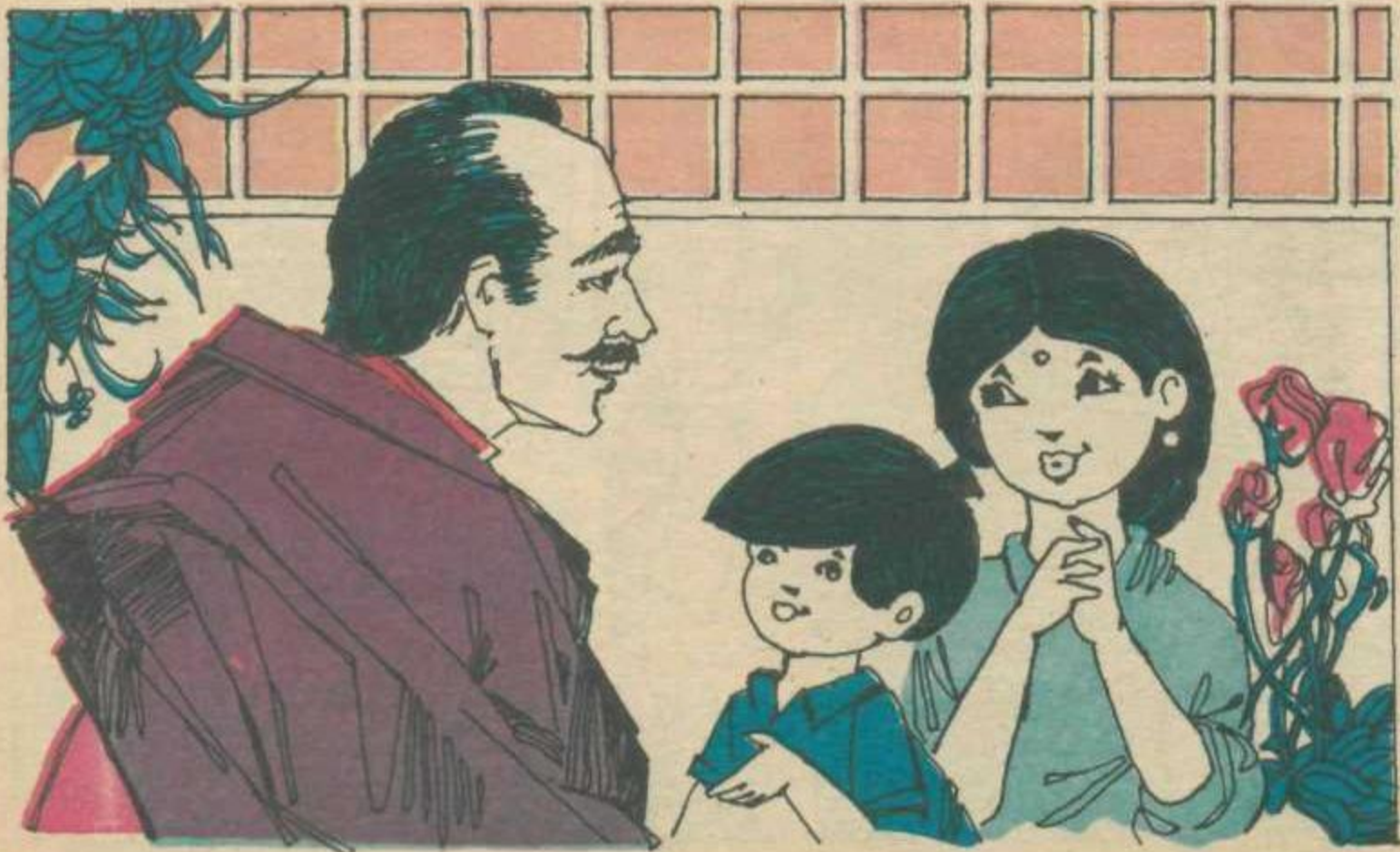
Vinod was ready with the answer. "I would like to know if he is still alive."

Kumud, happy about her little brother's prompt answer,

said, "Yes, of course, that's what I wondered about that little boy at the beach." Then turning to her uncle, she asked, "But uncle, only a doctor can say if a person is dead or alive, isn't it so?"

"We can see if he is breathing, no?" asked Vinod.

Uncle answered, "Yes, but even after one stops breathing, the heart may continue to beat for a few minutes. And as long as the heart beats, there is hope. But if the heart stops beating for



a few minutes, say more than three minutes, there is little hope. Do you know why?"

When he saw no answer coming from the children, uncle asked again, "Do you know what work the heart does?"

"Yes, uncle," said Kumud. "The heart pumps blood to the different parts of the body; and blood carries the oxygen needed for living."

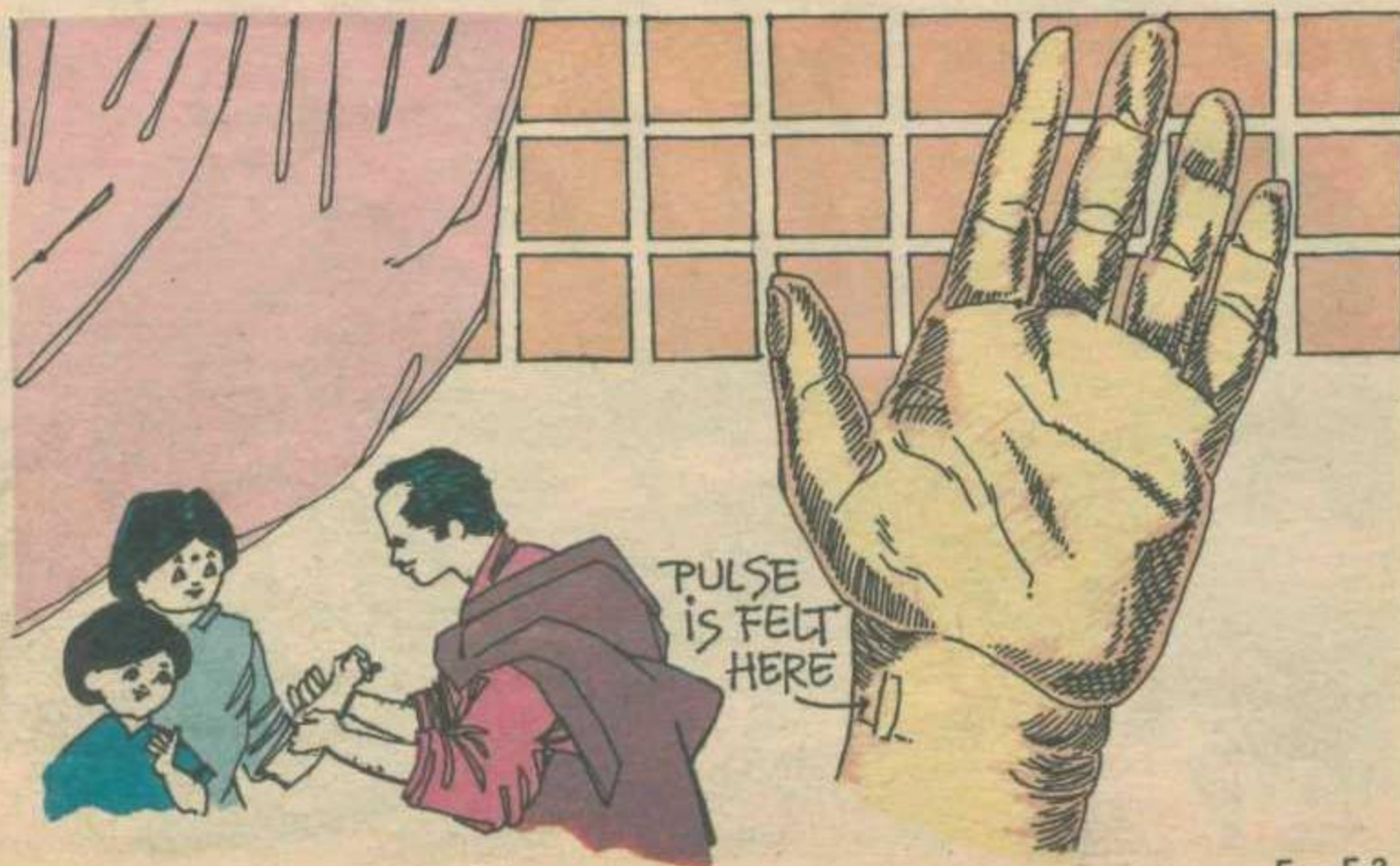
"Very good," said uncle. "If the heart stops beating for a few minutes, many parts of the body suffer without oxygen; many cells in the brain start dying. Since all the life-activities of the body are controlled by the brain, death of the brain is the

death of a man. So, it is important to know whether the heart is still beating; because once it stops, a man begins to die."

Kumud asked, "How do we find out if the heart is beating, uncle?"

"We do that by first checking the pulse. I'll show you how to do it." He took Kumud's hand and said, "See, this is your wrist, the palm-side of it. And this is the border of the wrist, in line with the thumb, where you can feel a hard bony edge. The pulse can be felt on the palm-side of the wrist, just near the bony edge," replied Uncle.

"You feel it like this—place the tips of you middle three



fingers in a line at this place, and put your thumb on the back of the wrist. Thus you hold the wrist lightly between your thumb and fingers; and with a little pressure, you can feel the pulse like a wave on your finger tips. Now both of you try it on each other and tell me if you can feel it."

The children started to try it out in real earnest.

Uncle Ram said, "You must press lightly with your finger tips. If you do not press at all or if you press too hard, you won't feel the pulse."

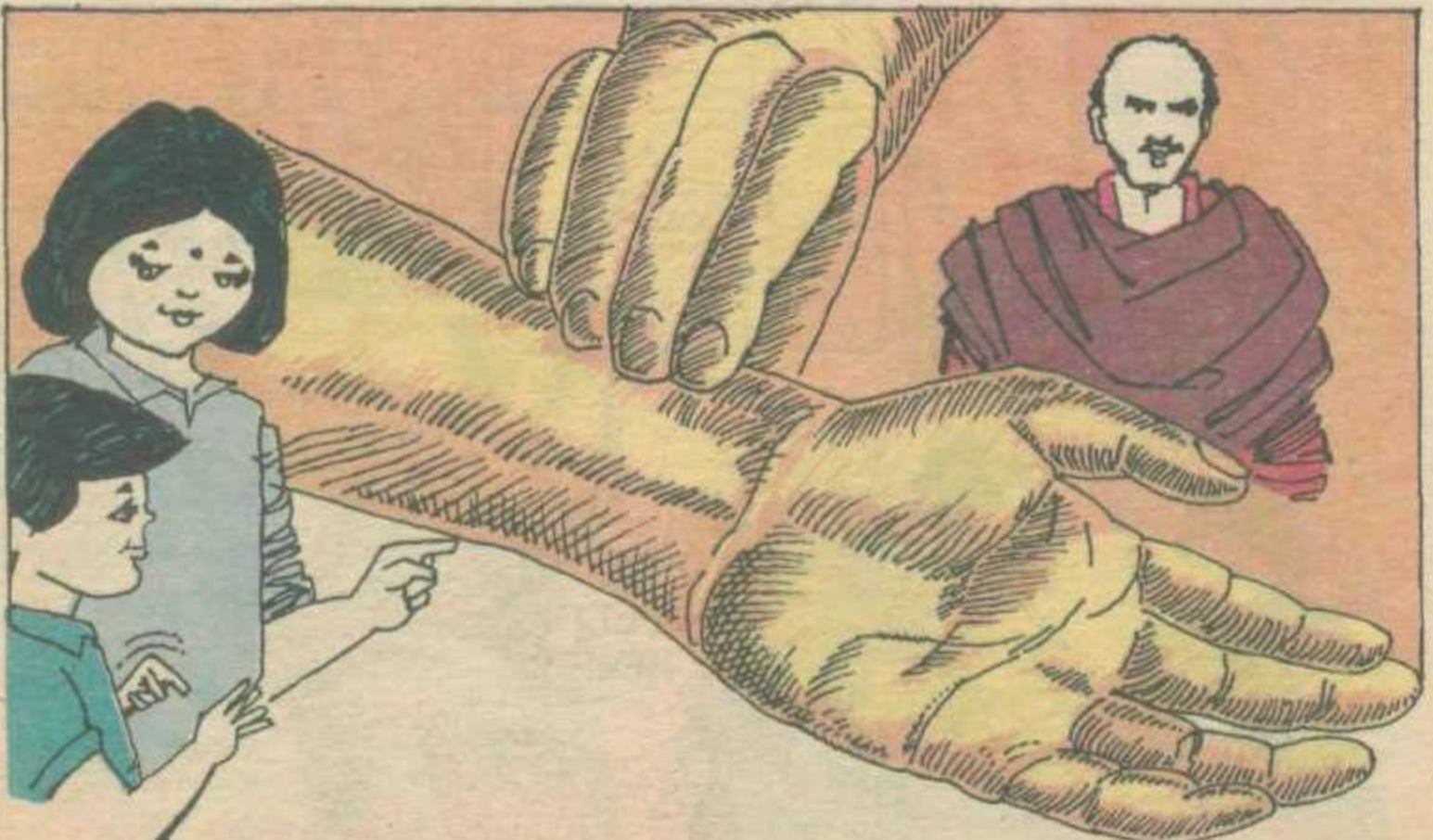
Soon the children's faces brightened up. "Yes, we can feel it," they said.

Uncle asked, "If we can feel the pulse, what does that mean?"

Kumud answered, "We know that the heart is beating and the person is alive."

Uncle said, "Now I will tell you the things to note when we feel the pulse. First, we feel how forceful or weak the pulse is. If you have felt the pulse of many healthy persons, you will know when the pulse is very feeble. This pulse may become feeble if the person has had a lot of bleeding, inside or outside of the body."

"Next we see how fast or slow the pulse is by counting how often it is felt in a minute; this



we call the rate of the pulse. Do you know the normal pulse-rate?"

Kumud said, "Seventy-two per minute, uncle?"

Uncle said, "We say that the average is Seventy-two. But it is different from person to person; anything between sixty to eighty may be taken as normal. It will be faster after exercise, or during fever, and sudden emotions like fear and anger. It will be fast when there has been much bleeding also—it is as if the heart is trying to supply the body with the smaller quantity of available blood, by pumping faster."

"Can we feel the pulse anywhere else, uncle?" asked Vinod.

"Yes, we can feel it in a few other places," said uncle Ram. "We can feel it in the neck, in

the pit at the side of the adam's apple. We can feel it on the inner side of the arm and also at the junction of the thigh and the body. You can try to feel your pulse at all these places."

Kumud asked, "If we do not feel the pulse, what do we do, uncle?"

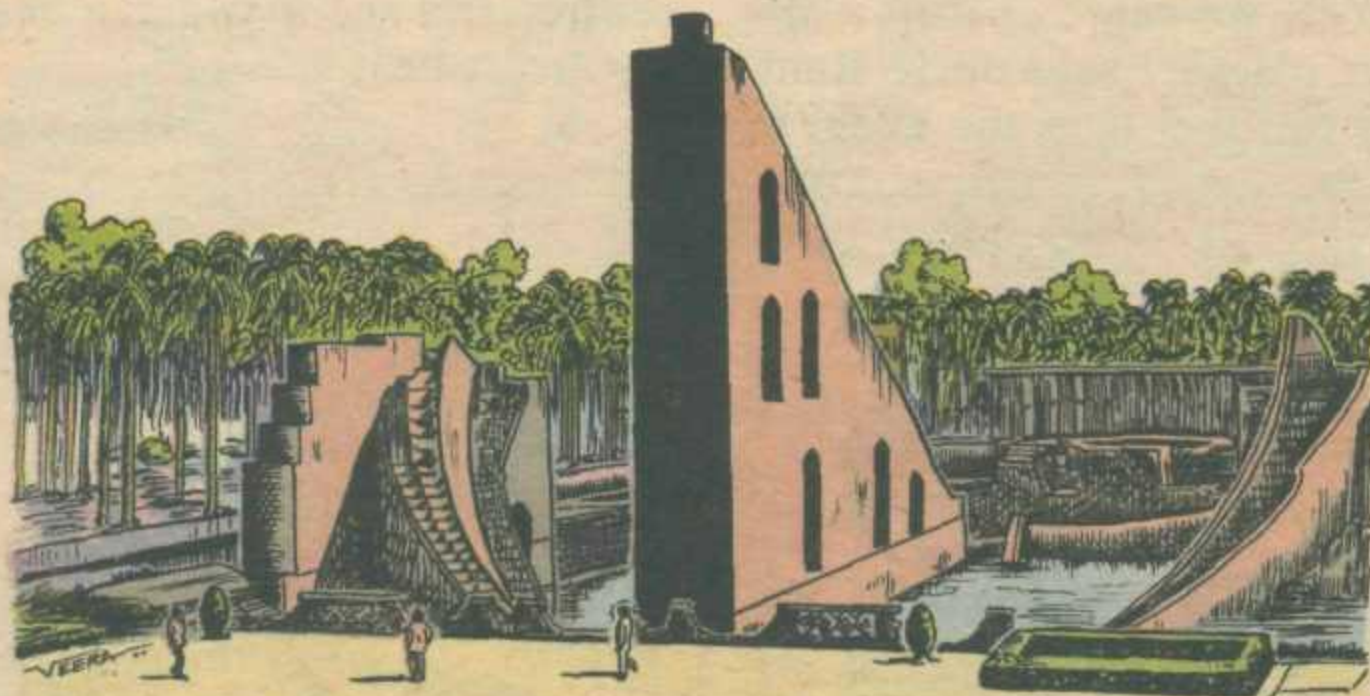
Uncle answered, "Suppose you have practised feeling the pulse with many of your friends and you are quite sure of feeling it. Then if in a person lying motionless and unconscious, you do not feel even a weak pulse in any of these places, probably his heart has stopped beating. If you are in a quiet place, you can try to make sure by pressing your ear firmly to his chest, just to the left of the centre, and see if you can hear the heart-beat."

To Continue



JANTAR MANTAR

In ancient India science had made great progress. Modern scholars agree that what is today known as Plastic Surgery, was practised in essence by the great surgeon, Susruta, some two thousand years ago, in his own way. Similarly, the old sages had gathered much knowledge in astronomy and astrology. But such scientific interest had been absent for centuries. Raja Jai Singh II of Jaipur tried to revive the interest in the early 18th century. He built an observatory each at Jaipur, Delhi, Varanasi, Mathura and Ujjain. Known as Jantar Mantar, his observatory at Delhi is most famous. The largest of the instruments built here is a sun-dial, known as the Samrat Yantra. The other instruments indicate movements of the sun, the moon and other planets.



CLEVERNESS TURNED INTO WISDOM

It was raining. Seth Jaimal had been left in the market by the horse carriage which came from the town. The carriage could have carried him up to his home two miles away, but for that the driver wanted a quarter-rupee more than the fare fixed for the travel from the town to the market.

Jaimal was not willing to give a quarter-rupee more. He was sure that he can employ a porter to carry his luggage for half that amount. He had been out on a pilgrimage and had spent a little more than he had planned to spend. Now he was determined to save as much as he could.

"Look here, fellow, will you carry my luggage up to Haripur?" he asked a poor man who was returning from the market after making some small purchases.

"Up to Haripur? I must be paid a quarter-rupee," said the man.

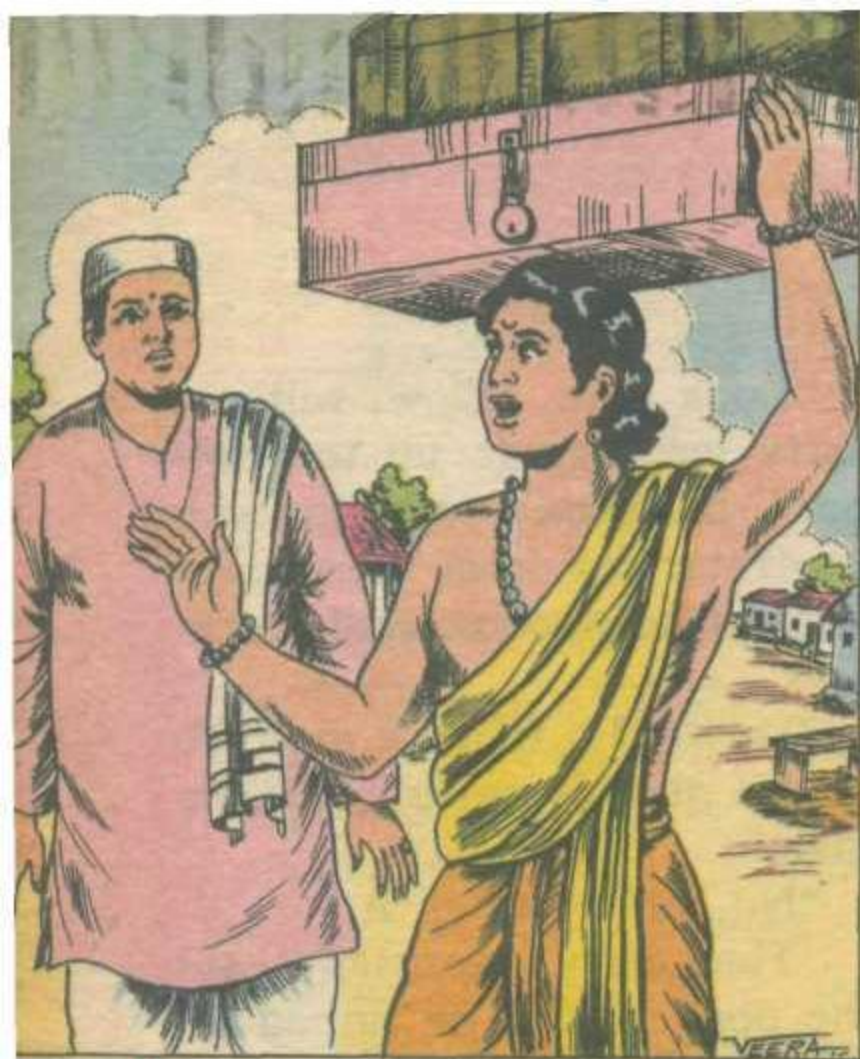
"No, only half of it."

"Then carry it yourself," said the poor man as he turned his back at him.

Jaimal kept asking several people who looked poor and needy. But none was willing to carry it for less than a quarter-rupee.

The rain had stopped. Seth





Jaimal tried to carry his burden himself. He lifted it all right, but could hardly walk a few steps with the weight. He sat down panting.

All the while a young hermit who sat under a tree was observing him. The hermit knew that Seth Jaimal was a millionaire. but Seth Jaimal did not know the hermit. "Sethji," the hermit called out, "Will you let me carry your luggage?" the hermit asked.

The Seth looked at him suspiciously and said, "But, mind you, I will not give you more than two annas!"

"That won't do," said the hermit.

"All right, I'll give you three annas, not a paisa more!"

"That won't do either. In fact, I will not do your work unless you agree to my terms," said the hermit.

"What are your terms?"

"You must narrate to me the glories of God or you will hear me narrate them to you on our way. I don't need any money," said the hermit.

Seth Jaimal found the condition rather amusing. "All right, you carry my luggage and also tell me whatever you wish to," said he.

They began to walk. The hermit went on telling him about the very purpose of life and about the joys of seeking after God. At first Seth Jaimal only pretended to hear him while remaining absorbed in his own selfish thoughts. But he did not know when the hermit claimed all his attention. When they reached home after an hour, Jaimal felt that the brief time he spent in the hermit's company had been most rewarding to him.

"Sir, I have been a sinner in making you bear my luggage. Till today I thought that I was clever, but now I know what a

fool I am!" said Seth Jaimal.

"You are clever, though you are not wise," calmly commented the hermit.

"What is your advice to me?"

"Offer your cleverness to God. He may turn it into wisdom," said the hermit.

The hermit then departed. Seth Jaimal could not decide how to offer his cleverness to God, but at least he began to pray to God and told Him that he was offering his cleverness to Him.

Shortly thereafter the hermit died and then died the Seth. The Seth's spirit was led to the court of Yama.

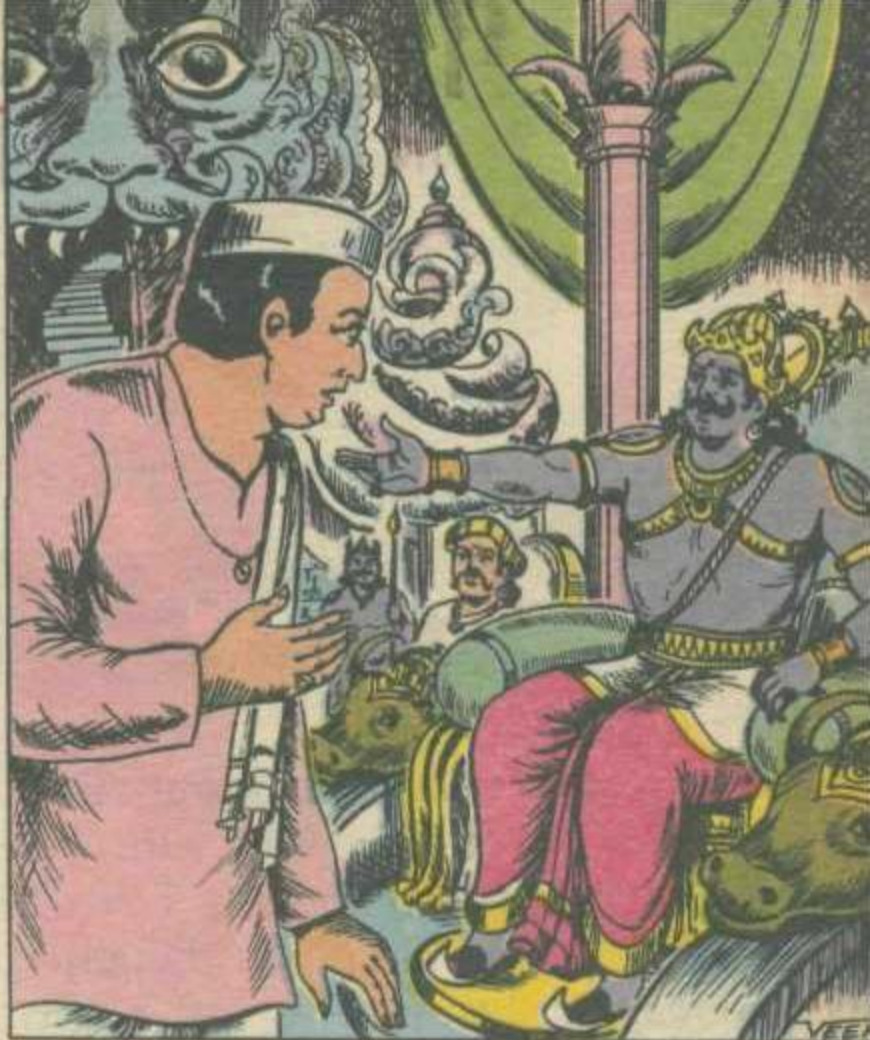
"I see that you have a lot of sins, but an hour's good deed in your life. Now, for your sins, you will suffer hell for a long, long time, but for your hour's good deed which was remaining in the company of a hermit, you can dwell in heaven for a day. Which experience do you want first?" asked Yama.

"Where dwells the hermit's spirit?" asked Seth Jaimal.

"In heaven, of course!" said Yama.

"Can I be near him?"

"Why not!" asked Yama and he sent him to the hermit.



The hermit's spirit remained engrossed in God. Jaimal's spirit dwelt near him, filled with reverence for him. A day passed, but the officials of Yama could not take him away. He was protected by the hermit's aura.

"All right," said Yama, "let him skip hell. Let him be there till he is reborn on earth."

"How happy I am!" exclaimed the Seth's spirit.

"Because you had offered your cleverness to God, it became wisdom and that is why you chose to come to me. You will be surely a much better man in your next life," said the hermit's spirit.



WHO IS THE THIEF?

In the village Lalitpur lived Raghu Singh. His wife had died soon after giving birth to their only child, a daughter. Raghu brought up the girl, named Supriya, with great care.

Supriya was a very sweet girl, but at the same time she was intelligent and courageous. From an elderly woman in the neighbourhood she learnt the art of cooking. She practised it so well that her father told her from time to time, laughing, "My child, you must teach me how to cook. Otherwise, what am I to do once you are gone to your husband's house?"

Indeed, Raghu knew that it was time he found a good match for Supriya. All he wanted was, the young man to marry his daughter should be kind-hearted. He told some of his well-wishers about his need.

One day, as arranged by a well-wisher, a gentleman came to see Supriya. He was a wealthy merchant with a big house in the bazar. His son was educated and was looking after his business diligently.

The gentleman had heard much praise of Supriya. When he saw her and talked to her, he was convinced that what he had heard was entirely true. He told Raghu, "I am very happy about the proposal. However, I will send my word, after consulting my wife and son, in a day or two." He then took leave of Raghu.

An hour later came in a dear friend of Raghu, Suryakant. He said, "Raghu, I have located an excellent match for our Supriya. He is Prabhakar of Kumudwadi. He visited me today for some work. He is still in my house.

Should I bring him here?"

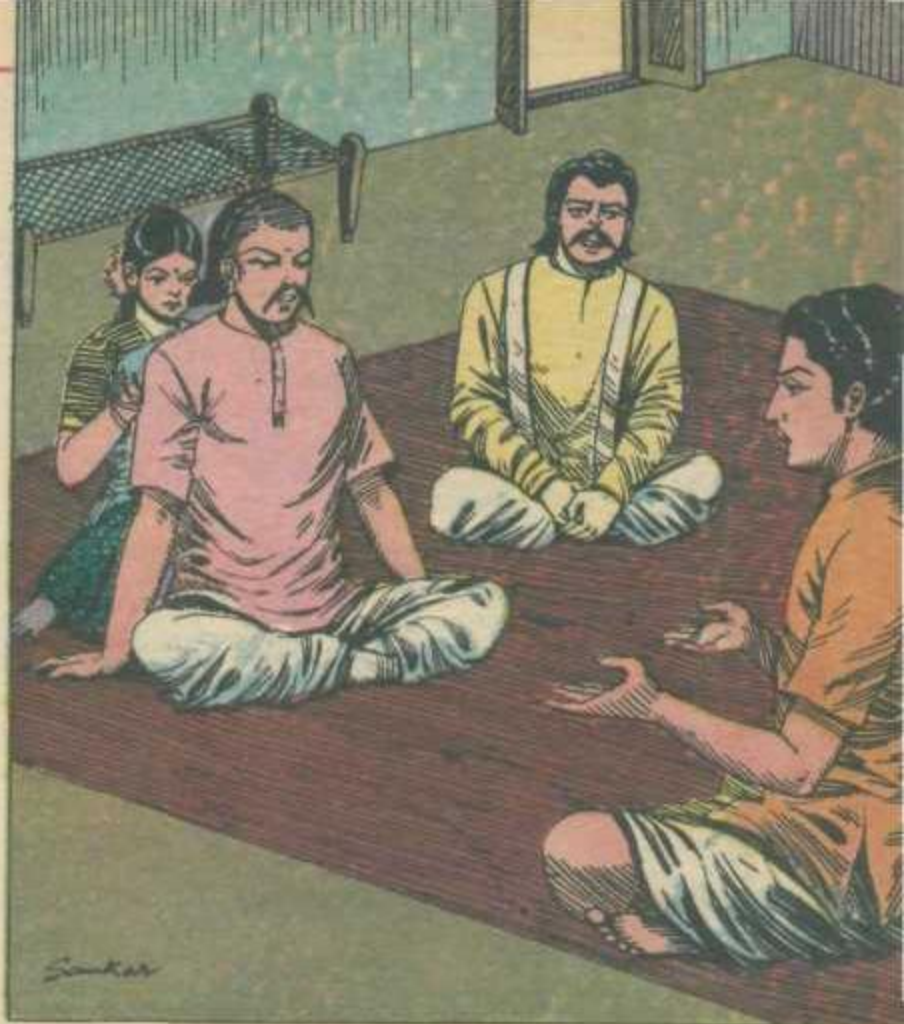
"Surya, a gentleman from the bazar had just had a meeting with us. He seems to have made up his mind to have Supriya for his daughter-in-law, though he has not conveyed his final decision to us."

"In that case what is the harm in having a look at Prabhakar?" asked Suryakant.

"No harm, since you, my dear friend, think that he is an eligible match for Supriya!" said Raghu.

Suryakant brought Prabhakar soon. They sat talking, Supriya hiding behind her father, for more than an hour. Raghu understood that Prabhakar had lost his parents in his childhood. The grandmother who reared him too had died. He lived alone in a small house left by his parents on the outskirts of his village. He had lands and cattle enough to fetch him a comfortable living.

After Prabhakar left, Raghu talked to his daughter and felt sure that like himself Supriya too had taken a liking for the young man. He said, "My daughter, let me proceed to the bazar. It is urgent that I know the other party's decision soon."



Raghu set out for the bazar. Supriya was brooding over the situation when someone knocked on the door. She opened it. It was a stranger. "Father is away and may not be back before nightfall. Can I do anything for you?" asked Supriya.

The stranger hesitated for a moment and then said, "Well, I am a well-wisher of your father. I hear that he is negotiating for your marriage with Prabhakar of Kumudwadi. For your information, Prabhakar spent two years in jail, accused of theft!"

The stranger went away hurriedly.

Supriya felt very upset. She



could not rest in peace. She had developed a fine impression of Prabhakar. Could that impression be utterly false?

After some restless moments, she took a prompt decision. She must confront Prabhakar and find out the truth.

Kumudwadi was an hour's walk away. It did not take much time for Supriya to locate Prabhakar's house. Prabhakar received her with pleasant surprise. But she asked him bluntly, "Is it true that you were imprisoned because you committed theft?"

"I was imprisoned accused of theft, not because I had commit-

ted theft. Please come in and sit down. I will tell you the whole story," politely said Prabhakar.

Supriya sat down. Prabhakar narrated his story:

Once he was on his way to the town in a hired carriage. Midway an old woman stopped the carriage and on learning that he was going to the town, said tearfully, "My son, my husband was to travel to the town today with this box of sweetmeats for my grandson. But the old man took ill. My grandson must be waiting near the Shiva temple at the entrance into the town. Will you kindly hand over this box to him?"

Prabhakar was only too ready to oblige her. He took charge of the box. The old woman had told him that her grandson was twelve years of age and most probably he will be wearing a yellow shirt. When Prabhakar stopped at the Shiva temple and got down from the carriage, he saw a boy with a yellow shirt running away. He could not understand why. The next moment two policemen caught hold of him and asked him what he had in the box. "Nothing but sweets," said Prabhakar. The policemen opened it. There

were sweets in the box, but under them was found a gold necklace."

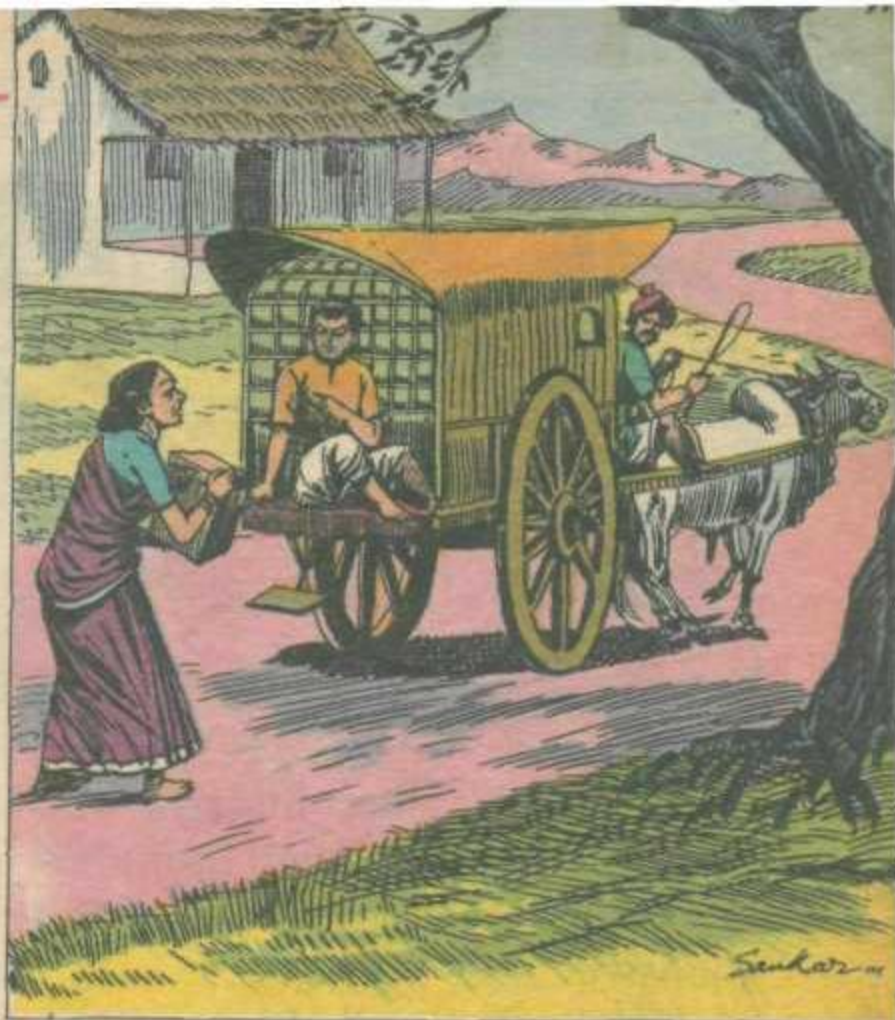
"We had got the intelligence that this property stolen from a wealthy pilgrim may reach the town today. Our good luck, we got not only the necklace but also the burglar," the policemen said with satisfaction.

"I'm no burglar!" cried out Prabhakar.

"Only their accomplice!" laughed the policemen. They led him to the Kotwal. After a brief trial he was thrown into jail. All prisoners had to work. Prabhakar was made to work in the king's farm. Luckily, one of the fellow-prisoners who worked with him was an expert farmer. He taught him all about farming. Prabhakar forgot that he was in jail and felt as if he was in a training camp for farming! Upon his release he put his knowledge to use in his own fields.

Supriya heard him with rapt attention. She smiled and said, "Why did you hide this part of your life when you met us in the morning?"

"I tried, but could not come to it during our very first meeting. At the same time I did not



wish to hide it. That is why I sent my friend to warn you about it!" said Prabhakar.

"Oh, was the stranger sent by you?" Supriya asked with surprise.

"He was," said Prabhakar. "He also informed your father about it on the way."

His friend was his neighbour. Prabhakar called him and both of them escorted Supriya to her house and left her there.

Raghu was back from the bazar a bit late at night. "I have practically finalised the proposal, though I have said that I will send my word tomorrow!" he said with a forced smile.

"Why did you take time till



tomorrow?" asked Supriya who was intelligent enough to understand that her father was a bit pensive.

"Well, it is nothing much. They want a dowry. I think I can talk to the village landlord and sell this house. What use do I have with the house once you are married off? My friend, the priest, says that he will be happy to give me one of those rooms meant for the temple services!" said Raghu.

Supriya was gazing at her father. Tears came to her eyes. She said, "Father, send word to the merchant to the effect that you will be the last person to

give a dowry. Please finalise the proposal with Prabhakar."

"Prabhakar? I liked him immensely. But ..." Raghu stopped.

"But he served a term in jail!" Supriya said smiling through her tears. Then she narrated to her father all that had happened during his absence.

Raghu's happiness burst into tears. "I realise," he said, "Prabhakar is no thief; it is the merchant who has a million and who still wants a dowry, is the thief—rather a bandit."

"Right, Father!" said Supriya. Father and daughter laughed together.

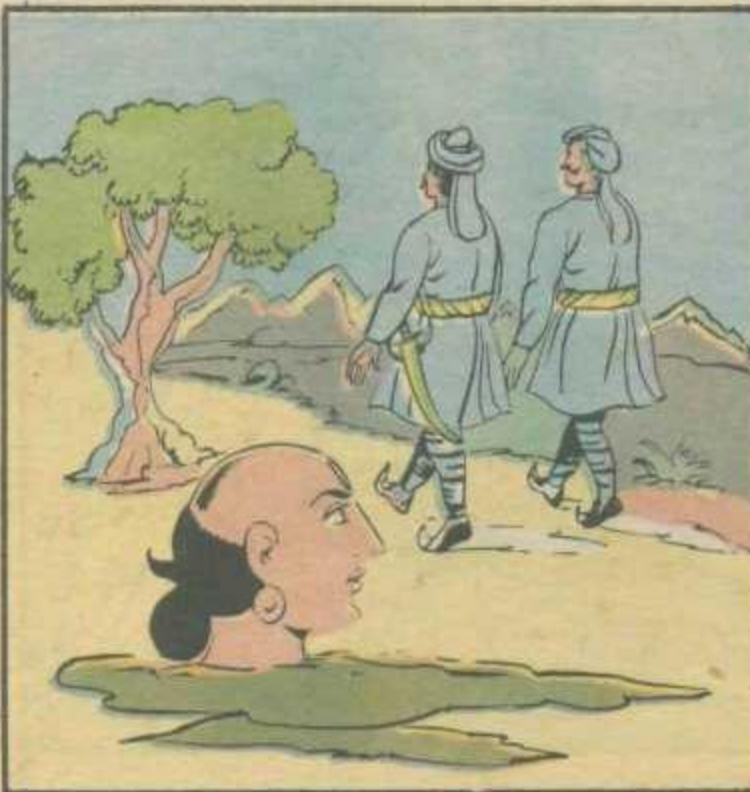
**MAKE SURE OF YOUR COPY OF ENGLISH
CHANDAMAMA
BY PLACING A REGULAR ORDER
WITH YOUR NEWS AGENT**

THE JESTER AND THE BANDIT



Once Tenali Raman was passing through a small kingdom which was much harassed by a bandit. The king had announced a big reward for one who could catch him.

As the king had threatened to dismiss the police chief, he was eager to brand someone as the bandit. He found the stranger Tenali Raman and captured him.



The king summarily ordered him to be put to death. He was led to an open ground outside the town and left buried up to the neck in the sand as was the custom in the kingdom.

Tenali Raman was helpless. In the moonlit night, he saw someone coming that way. He began chanting a false hymn.



The surprised man who was none other than the bandit came closer and asked what he was doing.

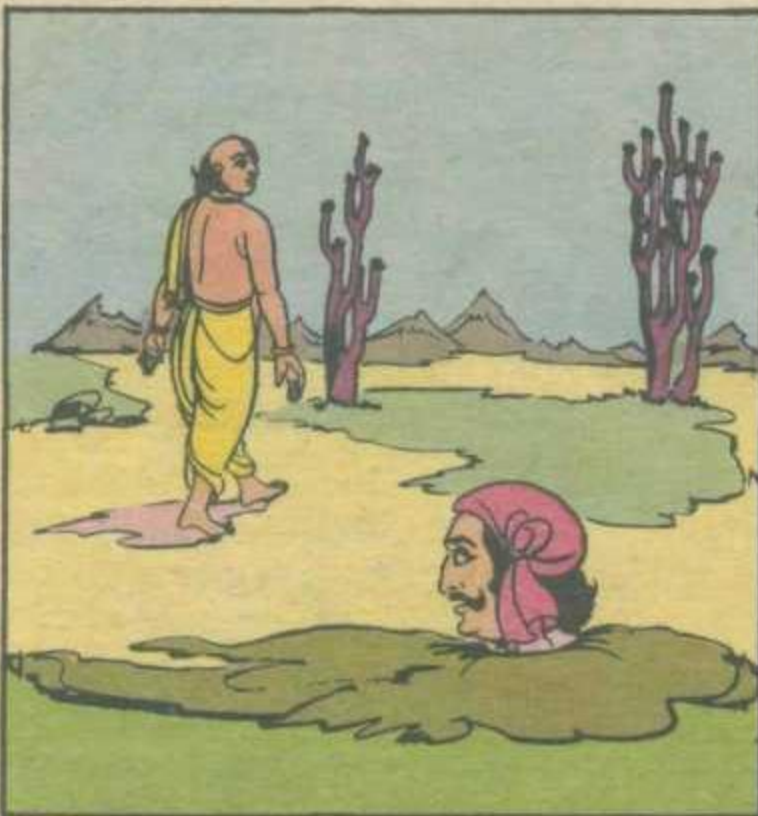


"By chanting a certain hymn here at this hour, one becomes stronger by ten times. Will you please dig me out? I wish to see how much I have succeeded!" said Raman.

Out of the pit, Tenali Raman began flexing his muscles. He planted a blow on the bandit's back and said, "I was too weak to kill a fly. Look now!" He planted another blow.

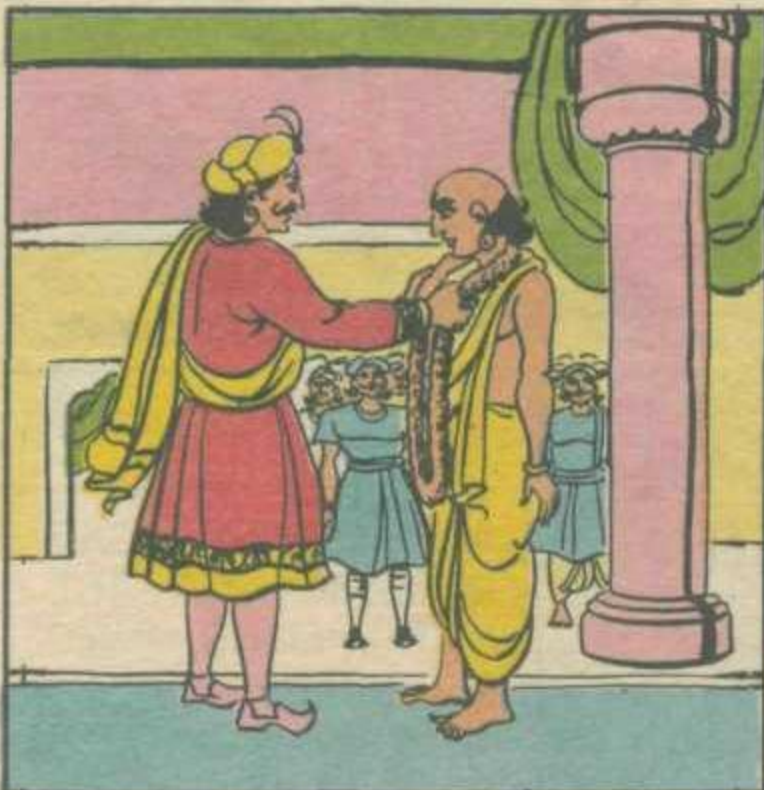
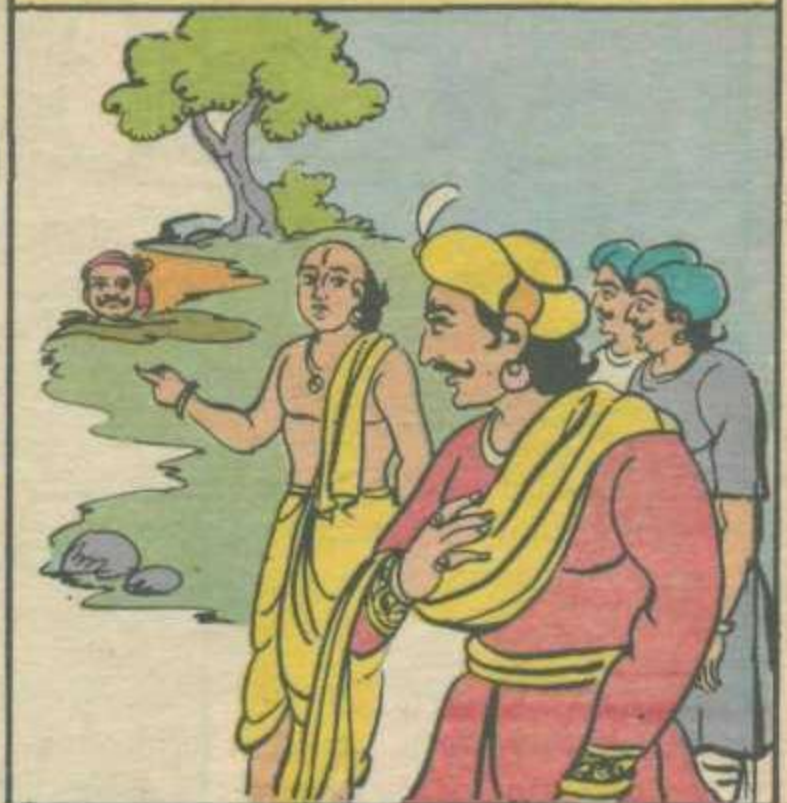


"My friend, can you teach me the hymn and bury me here? I will give you a part of my loot," said the bandit. But he buried his bag and said, "After I become stronger."



Tenali Raman then taught the false hymn to the bandit and buried him. "I will be back soon," he said, "to claim my reward." He then walked away fast.

Straight he went to the king's court. It was morning. He told the king everything and led him to the field and showed the bandit and the loot.

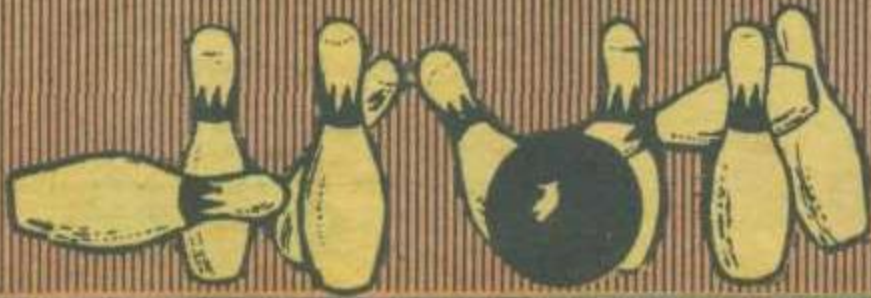


The bandit was brought to the court for further enquiry. The king apologised to Tenali Raman and honoured and rewarded him, when he knew that he was a king's courtier.

The king then asked if he could do anything more. "Yes my lord, I want to try my fist on your police chief," said Raman. The king let him do so and also dismissed the chief.



NINE PINS / TEN PINS



NINE-PIN BOWLING WAS INTRODUCED INTO THE UNITED STATES FROM GERMANY IN THE 17TH CENTURY. LATER IT WAS PROHIBITED BECAUSE OF ITS ILLICIT GAMBLING CONNECTIONS, SO A TENTH PIN WAS ADDED TO EVADE THE BAN. THE NEW STYLE GAME PROVED EVEN MORE POPULAR.

LEEDS UNITED WERE UNDEFEATED IN 34 CONSECUTIVE FIRST DIVISION SOCCER MATCHES BETWEEN OCTOBER 1968 AND AUGUST 1969.

34-GAME RUN



25 YEAR RECORD



AMERICAN JESSE OWENS HELD THE MEN'S LONG JUMP RECORD OF 26FT 8¼ IN (8.13M) FOR OVER 25 YEARS—FROM 1935 TO 1960

A little bird with a big appetite



A ROBIN CAN EAT 4.26M (14FT) OF WORMS A DAY. IT CAN CONSUME 41 PER CENT MORE THAN ITS BODY WEIGHT IN TWELVE HOURS.

TALLEST RANGE



THIRTEEN OF THE WORLD'S TWENTY HIGHEST MOUNTAINS ARE IN THE HIMALAYAS. THE OTHER SEVEN ARE IN THE NEARBY KARAKORUM RANGE.

HIGH FLYER



ALPINE CHOUGHS ARE KNOWN TO LIVE AS HIGH AS 8,200M (26,902 FT) ABOVE SEA LEVEL. THEY HAVE FREQUENTLY FOLLOWED CLIMBING EXPEDITIONS UP MT. EVEREST.

SPONGE

A SPONGE IS REALLY THE SKELETON STRUCTURE OF WHAT WERE ONCE HUNDREDS OF TINY MARINE ANIMALS. THESE ANIMALS LIVE IN CLOSE COLONIES ATTACHED TO ROCKS OR ON THE SEA BED. THEIR SIZE RANGES FROM 1MM TO ALMOST 1M.





THE REWARD

In a certain Chinese village lived a young man named Tong. He had lost his mother when he was very young. He did not remember her; and his father took such great care of him that he had no reason to miss her.

His father used to tell Tong, "Always be truthful and honest. Whatever be the hardship you face in life, your truthfulness and your honesty will give you the true satisfaction in life."

Tong loved his father very much. They had a small field and both father and son worked on it hard. But, as luck would have it, one day Tong's father fell ill and died.

That was a great shock to Tong. He buried his father's dead body in his field, but it was

his great desire to raise a monument over his grave. That way, he felt, he would be able to do justice to his father's memory.

But he had no money. He thought over the situation for some days and decided upon a course of action. He went to the town and sat on the pavement with a piece of writing hanging from his neck. The writing said that he was for sale. But the buyer must pay him enough money to raise a decent tomb.

Days passed. Many passers-by read the inscription, but nobody came forward to buy him. The little money he had with him was all spent. He starved for two days, but did not give up the hope of finding a buyer.

On the third day a landlord saw him. Somehow, he agreed

to his condition and paid the money. Tong was delighted. He went back to his village and requested the masons to build the monument. They did a good work, for they loved Tong very much.

After the monument was ready, Tong spent a day meditating. Then he proceeded to the town and met the landlord.

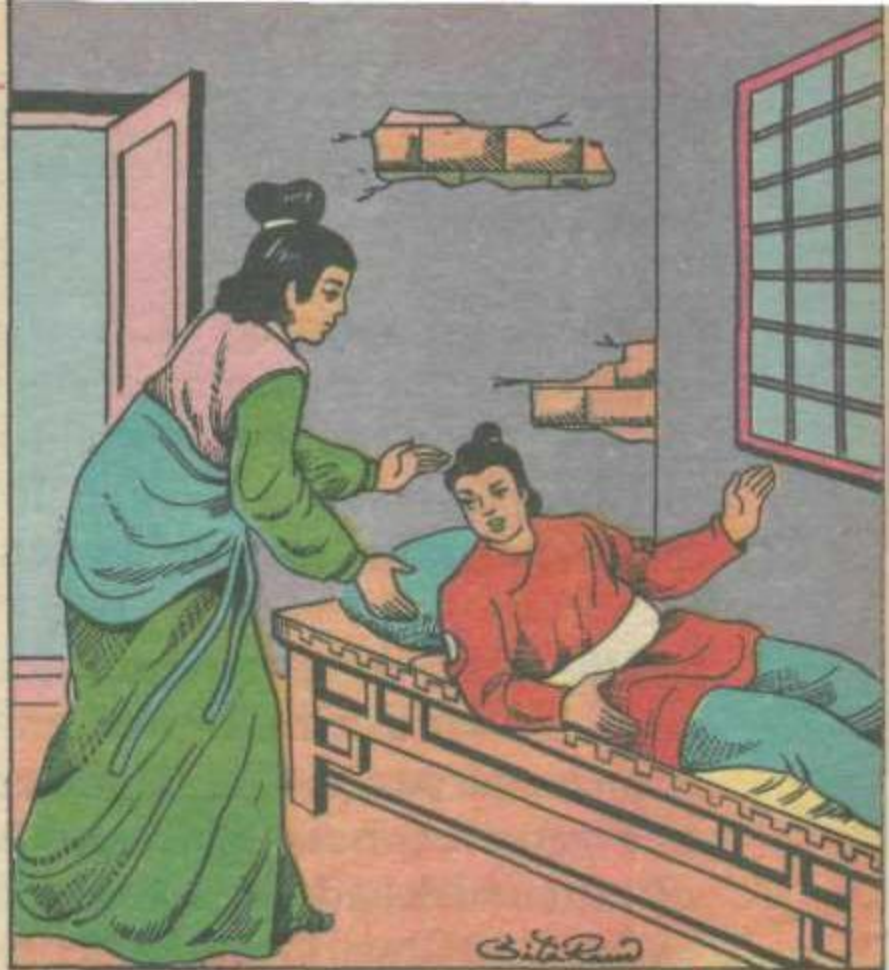
The landlord had a deserted house near his farm. Tong lived in that house, alone, and worked in the farm.

He had to work very hard. He also cooked for himself. After the harvest season he fell ill. The landlord hardly cared for his health or welfare. He suffered much.

One night he felt as if somebody was standing by his bedside. He opened his eyes and saw a beautiful young lady observing him. At first he thought that it was a dream. But slowly he knew that it was reality.

"Please get up. You are cured of your illness," said the lady in a sweet voice.

Tong sat up and found that his fever and weakness had completely disappeared.



"The food is ready. Eat and you will feel better," said the lady. She had already cooked for him. Tong had never tasted anything so delicious.

"You go to work and I will manage your house," she said.

"May I know who you are?" asked Tong.

"My name is Chi. It is not necessary for you to know anything more. Well, will you mind marrying me?" she asked.

"Mind marrying you? I will be the happiest man. But I have no means to manage a household!" said Tong.

"That will be my business," said Chi.

They got married. Chi was found knitting charming designs on silk. Soon the town's well-to-do people made a beeline for her handicrafts. Months passed.

One day, as Tong returned from his work, Chi showed him a piece of paper. The landlord had received back the amount of money he had given to Tong and had written down that Tong was a free man now!

Great was Tong's joy. He returned to his village with Chi. They built a new house and lived happily. A year passed. Chi gave birth to a son. The people of the village said that they had never seen such a

lovely child.

One day, when the child was a year old, Chi told Tong, "It is time for me to depart!"

"Where?" asked Tong, quite surprised.

"Well, I must tell you that I am not a human being, but a nymph. The god who presides over the spirits of ancestors was very happy with your devotion to your father. He asked me to assume a human form and to set you free from your bondage to the landlord. I have done that. I am leaving enough money with you to buy more lands and to educate the child. Live happily," she said and, before Tong could say anything, she disappeared.





New Tales of King Vikram and the Vampire

FRIENDS AND FOES

Dark was the night and weird the atmosphere. It rained from time to time. At the intervals of the roars of thunder and the moaning of jackals could be heard the eerie laughter of spirits. Flashes of lightning showed fearful faces.

But King Vikram swerved not. He climbed the ancient tree once again and brought the corpse down. However, as soon as he began crossing the desolate cremation ground with the corpse lying on his shoulder, the vampire that possessed the corpse said, "O King, I don't know if you are acting according to the counsel of any friend of yours, at this unearthly hour of the night. But let me tell you, it does not take long for a friend to turn into a foe or for a foe to turn into a friend in this strange world of ours. I should perhaps illustrate my point through an example. Well, let me tell you a story. Pay attention to my nar-



ration. That may bring you some relief."

The vampire went on: "This happened many years ago. Chandragiri was then ruled by King Vishnubhadra. He was a kind-hearted man. Although he was not very old, he was sick and he decided to retire from the affairs of the state. He had full trust in his son, Aditya Kumar, the crown-prince. He made him the king and went to live in a health-resort.

The new king was found to be quite efficient and good-natured. He devoted his time and resources to his people's welfare and soon became very popular.

One day the young king went into a forest which lay in the frontier of his kingdom. Although he went for hunting, the forest charmed him so much that instead of hunting, he went on gazing at the scenery and galloped farther and farther into the forest.

Suddenly he found himself facing a beautiful valley. There was a murmuring brook and around it trees abounded in flowers and fruits.

He stood spellbound for a long time and then remarked to his companion, the commander of his army, "I did not know that we had such a place in our kingdom!"

"My lord, this valley is not a part of our kingdom. This belongs to Rudrapur," the commander informed him.

The young king became grave. Back in the palace, he asked the commander to mobilise his army. He then sent a battalion into the valley. The King of Rudrapur, Soumyadev, immediately ordered his army to drive away the invaders. There was a fierce battle fought. But since the army of Rudrapur was not prepared for such a confrontation, it was defeated.

The valley became a part of Chandragiri.

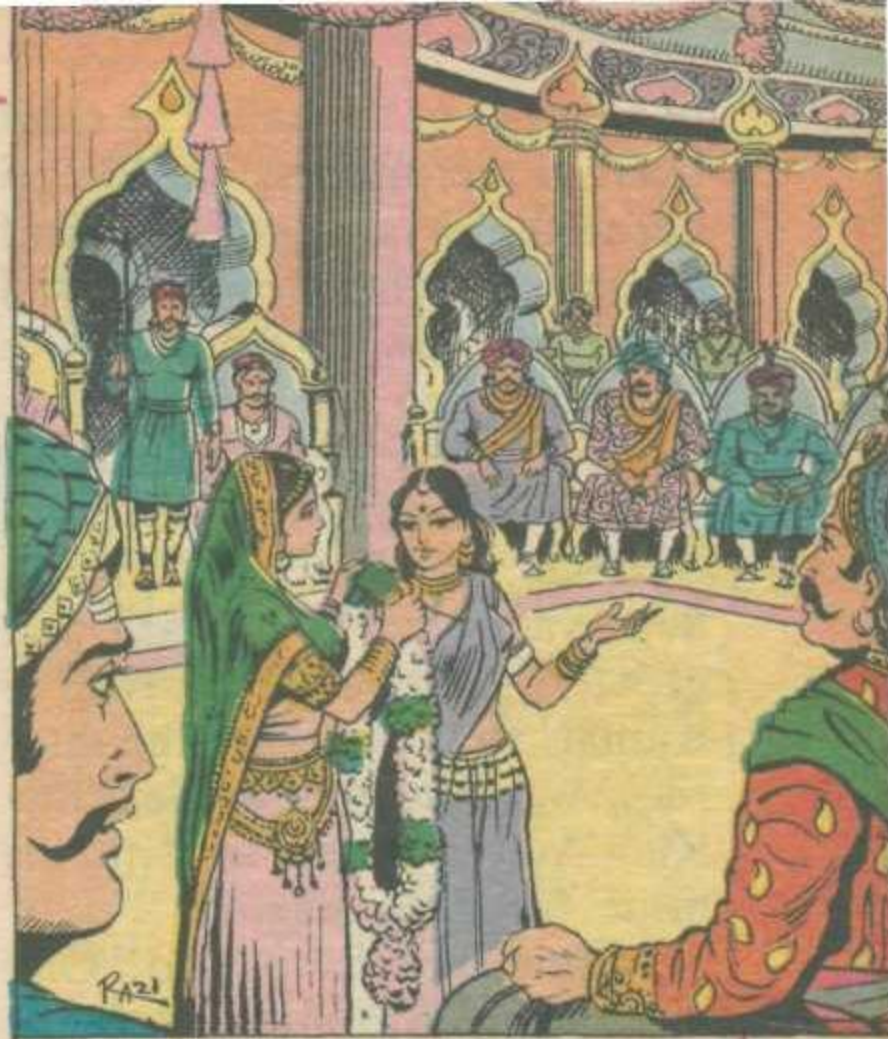
The King of Rudrapur, Soumyadev, who was a peace-loving man, felt much humiliated. He consulted his minister on the course of action that was desirable for him to follow. They all were of the opinion that the army of Rudrapur must be strengthened. Then they should fight to restore the valley to their kingdom.

They went ahead with preparations accordingly.

King Soumyadev had a beautiful and gifted daughter named Prabha. Astrologers who studied her horoscope said that she should be married within a year, for that was a propitious period in her life.

The royal dynasty of Rudrapur followed the tradition of Swayamvara. A princess chose her husband herself from an assembly of eligible princes. The king asked some of his leading courtiers to prepare a list of invitees for the occasion. The list was duly submitted to him for his approval. He read it and asked the courtiers, "Why is King Aditya Kumar's name missing from the list?"

The king's question naturally



surprised the courtiers. They had not included his name in the list because he was an enemy of Rudrapur and King Soumyadev was preparing to wage a war against Chandragiri! The courtiers understood that the king had changed his mind. Without a murmur they added Aditya Kumar's name to the list.

On the eve of the Swayamvara prince after prince arrived in the Rudrapur fort. Each one was received with due honour. King Aditya Kumar too met with a warm reception.

The auspicious function began. Princess Prabha was ushered into the hall by her father. Then the father retired

to a corner of the hall. The chief maid of the princess introduced her to the royal guests one after another as she slowly moved along the row of princes. She stopped when she came before Aditya Kumar. She blushed and garlanded him. Music and applause broke out. King Soumyadev came forward and greeted and blessed Aditya Kumar. In the evening the marriage was solemnised. Next day King Aditya Kumar left with his bride for Chandragiri.

A few months passed. One day King Soumyadev summoned the commander-in-chief of his army and said, "Are you

ready for the expedition?"

The commander-in-chief was taken aback, "What expedition you have in mind, my lord?" he asked.

"Why? Have you forgotten our resolve to recover the valley from Chandragiri?" asked the king.

"My lord, we will be ready in a fortnight," said the commander. He went away and resumed preparations for the expedition.

Spies carried the news of Rudrapur's military preparations to King Aditya Kumar. Immediately he sent his chief minister to Rudrapur. "My lord," the chief minister in-



formed King Soumyadev, "we have already withdrawn our guards from the valley. As ever, the valley belongs to Rudrapur."

Not only King Soumyadev, but also all the people of Rudrapur became happy, because a war was a bad thing, always creating more problems than it solved.

The vampire paused for a moment and then demanded of King Vikram in a challenging tone, "O King, can you resolve some of my doubts? I do not understand why King Soumyadev invited an enemy like Aditya Kumar to the

Swayamvara. Secondly, Princess Prabha's conduct too was surprising. Knowing well that Aditya Kumar was her father's foe, how could she choose him for her husband? Even more surprising is King Soumyadev's decision to lead his army against Chandragiri even after the young king had become his son-in-law. Had he gone eccentric? Lastly, why did Aditya Kumar surrender the ground he had gained through war? Was he afraid of Rudrapur's army? Answer my questions, if you can. Should you keep mum despite your knowledge of the answers, your head would roll



off your neck!"

King Vikram answered forthwith: "The very purpose of convening a Swayamvara is to give the princess a chance to choose her husband freely. To keep any eligible prince out of the assembly is to limit the freedom of the princess. If a father will do that, why should he not choose a match for his daughter himself? King Soumyadev was a good man. He wanted to observe the spirit of Swayamvara properly. Though Aditya Kumar had violated the border of Rudrapur, King Soumyadev must have heard of the good qualities of the young king. Now, the princess must have thought that if her father invited Aditya Kumar despite the young king being his enemy, it must be because the young king had extraordinary merits. That is

why she chose him.

"Now comes the question about King Soumyadev preparing to recover his lost valley. Any self-respecting king should do what he was doing. It was his duty as a king to see that nobody can get away with a chunk of his kingdom through aggression. He owed it to the dignity of his position and of his kingdom.

"Now the last question. King Aditya Kumar must have grown wiser. He must have realised that he had acted hastily. That was an unjust thing to do. A good man or a wise man does not hesitate to own up his mistake. Aditya Kumar was good and wise."

No sooner had King Vikram concluded his answer than the vampire, along with the corpse, gave him the slip.





THE HOLY BEGGAR

Rameshwar Bhatt of Vilasgarh was a famous physician. One day a messenger from a distant village named Jasimpur met him and requested him to pay a visit to his village. It was because Bhola Das, the wealthy merchant of the village, had fallen sick.

Bhatt promised to visit Jasimpur the next day and sent the messenger away.

He set out for Jasimpur in the morning. He was tired walking and sat down on the verandah of a hut. A woman came out and asked him if he needed anything. He wanted to drink a glass of water.

As he sat there, the woman told him her story. Her husband, Sudhir, worked very hard, but misfortunes, one after another, had reduced them to

utter poverty. Two years ago their crop was destroyed by flood. Last year their house was burgled. This year, the thatch under which they had stored their grain caught fire!

Bhatt sympathised with her and then resumed his journey. He reached the merchant's house at Jasimpur late in the afternoon. He examined his patient with great care and began giving him medicines. At the request of the merchant, he agreed to stay on there till the patient showed signs of recovery.

But there was no improvement in the patient's condition even on the third day. The patient said, "Bhattji, I have never done a good deed in my life. I'm afraid, I shall be dumped in hell as soon as I die!"

It struck Bhatt that the patient will not recover unless he is rid of his fear of hell. "My friend, I will make you perform such a good deed that you will surely be saved from hell." He then told him the plight of Sudhir and his wife. The merchant sent one of his servants to call Sudhir. When Sudhir came, the merchant gave him enough money to liquidate his debts and to construct a new house. Sudhir left with great satisfaction. Thereafter the merchant's condition began to improve. The physician took leave of him.

Three years passed. One day

a man called upon him. "I'm sent to you by Sudhir the holy beggar," said the man.

"Sudhir the holy beggar? Who is he?" asked Bhatt.

"Haven't you heard of him. The one by giving alms to whom people are cured of their ailments!" said the man.

Bhatt did not understand what he said. He asked, "What does he want of me?"

"He is sick himself," said the man.

Bhatt set out for the patient's house, led by the messenger. By noon they reached their destination. It was a fine house. It did not take long for Bhatt to recog-



nise the lady who greeted him in front of the house. She was the one whose misfortunes had moved him to get a donation for her husband from the merchant.

The lady led him into a corner of the verandah and told him in private what Sudhir, her husband had done during the last three years. The news of the merchant being cured of his illness by giving a donation to Sudhir spread in the area. Many people wondered: we too have given alms to beggars, but we do not get such swift results out of our piety! Sudhir must be a special man.

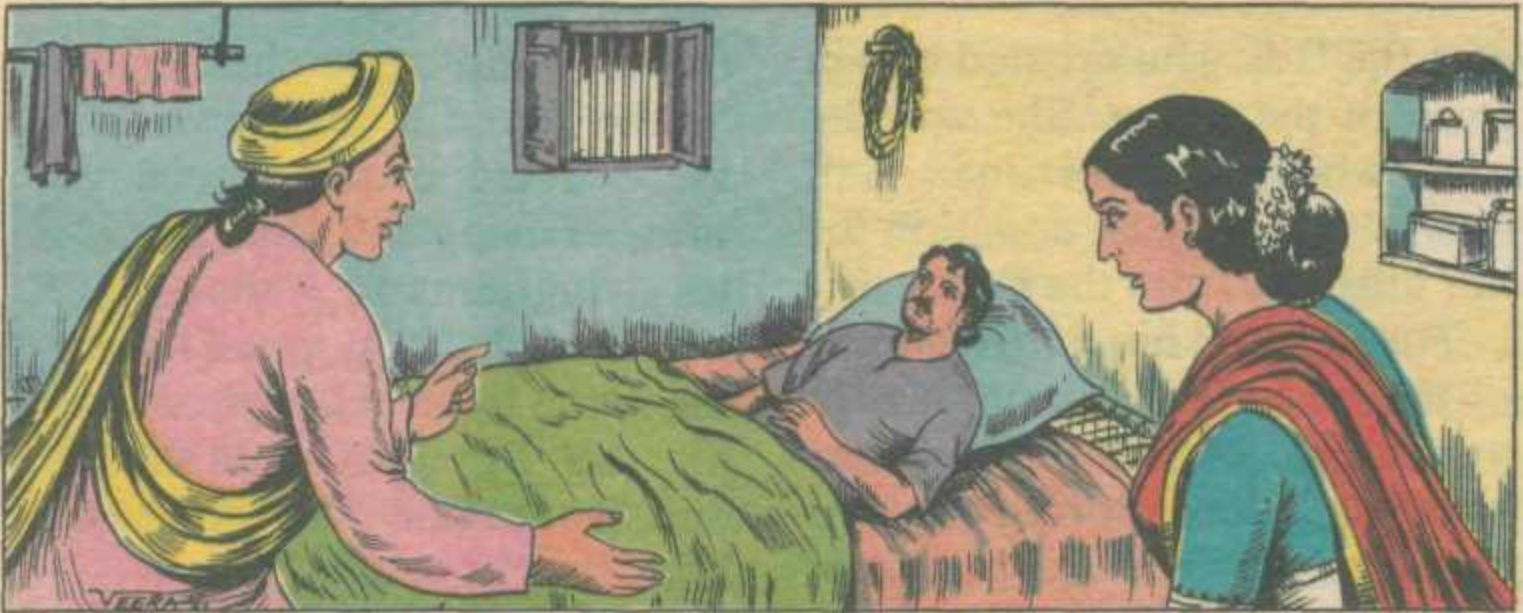
Sick people began to call

Sudhir and give him alms. Sudhir found it very rewarding. He boasted of his special virtues, "Giving me alms is equal to giving alms to a thousand!" he claimed. He stopped labouring in the fields. His wife did not like this. But what could she do? Sudhir became known as the holy beggar.

Bhatt heard everything before meeting the patient. Sudhir sat up in his bed at the sight of the physician and greeted him.

"Sir, once the merchant was ill and you made him give me alms and he was cured. Kindly find a man to receive alms from me so that I shall be cured," said





Sudhir.

"No such man can be found for you!" said Bhatt in a stern voice.

"Why sir?" asked Sudhir, feeling scared.

"For a donation or alms to be effective, it must have been earned by the donor with his labour. You have accumulated money through deception. You have no right to expect any benefit from giving alms!" said Bhatt.

"Then, what am I to do?" asked Sudhir.

"I will give you a medicine. But it will work only if you promise to stop begging. You are no longer needy. When anybody proposes to give you alms, direct him to the most needy man you know. You must labour and live," said Bhatt.

Sudhir repented for what he had done and promised to change his life-style. The physician started treating him.

ALL EXAMS IN ENGLISH ARE EASY

"Have you heard of an Indian, Mihir Sen, crossing the English Channel?"

"What is astonishing in that? All educated Indians are well-versed in English. Had he done it with Italian or Spanish..."





PROFIT FROM MONKEYS

Somnath the farmer was scared of monkeys. That was because, when he was a small boy, once a monkey descended before him and snatched away from his hand a sweetmeat he had half eaten. When the boy cried, the monkey silenced him by planting a slap on his cheek.

That had been too fearful an experience for Somnath to forget. He avoided monkeys as much as he could.

But can a farmer avoid monkeys all his life? He had to go to the fields, after all. And monkeys are free to jump from tree to tree or to scamper along the fields all the time!

One day it so happened that while Somnath sat leaning against a tree, relaxing for a while, he saw a troupe of monkeys playfully advancing towards him. He grew stiff and sat like a

statue. The monkeys did not care for him, but began handling the bundle he had hung on the tree. The bundle contained his old towel and some parched rice.

The monkeys opened the bundle and tore the towel to pieces and ate the parched rice happily.

Thereafter their attention went over to Somnath. They were perhaps surprised that he did not quarrel with them nor did he try to protect his bundle. Slowly they approached him. Somnath grew more stiff. He was almost in a swoon.

The monkeys touched him and shook him, but he remained like a stone. They chattered among themselves. Some of them went away and returned in no time with a handful of coins. They spread the coins before

him and each of them bowed to him. Then they left the place in search of some new adventure.

Somnath understood that the monkeys had somewhere seen devotees bowing to a holy man or an idol and placing their offerings there. Since they love to imitate, they had at last done it. They must have taken away the money from some traveller as they took away his rice.

Somnath owed some money to the village moneylender who was harassing him for it. He went straight to his house and paid his dues. The moneylender was surprised. "How could you get so much money so suddenly?" he asked Somnath.

Somnath reported the episode to him. The moneylender was quite excited with the re-

port.

The next day he too carried a bundle of rice and hung it on the same tree and sat leaning against it. The troupe of monkeys came and put the rice to good use. Then they approached the moneylender and began to touch him. Now, the moneylender was extremely vulnerable to tickling. If anyone touched his arm-pit or waist, he would give out shrieks which were a mixture of laughter and fear.

That is exactly what he did. The monkeys were amused and they went on tickling him till he almost swooned away.

And that was the end of it. The monkeys made no offering to him. Perhaps they had no more coins left with them, anyway!





CLASSIC STORIES OF INDIA

SHAKUNTALA

(3)

(Story so far): King Dushyanta, on a visit to Sage Kanva's hermitage in the forest, married Shakuntala, the adopted daughter of the sage. But, because of a curse, he forgot about it. Shakuntala, feeling dejected, lived in a forest, bringing up her son, Bharata.

Some years passed. One day a fisherman, who had not been able to catch any fish in the river for a long time, at last found a big fish caught in his net. He called it a day and returned home.

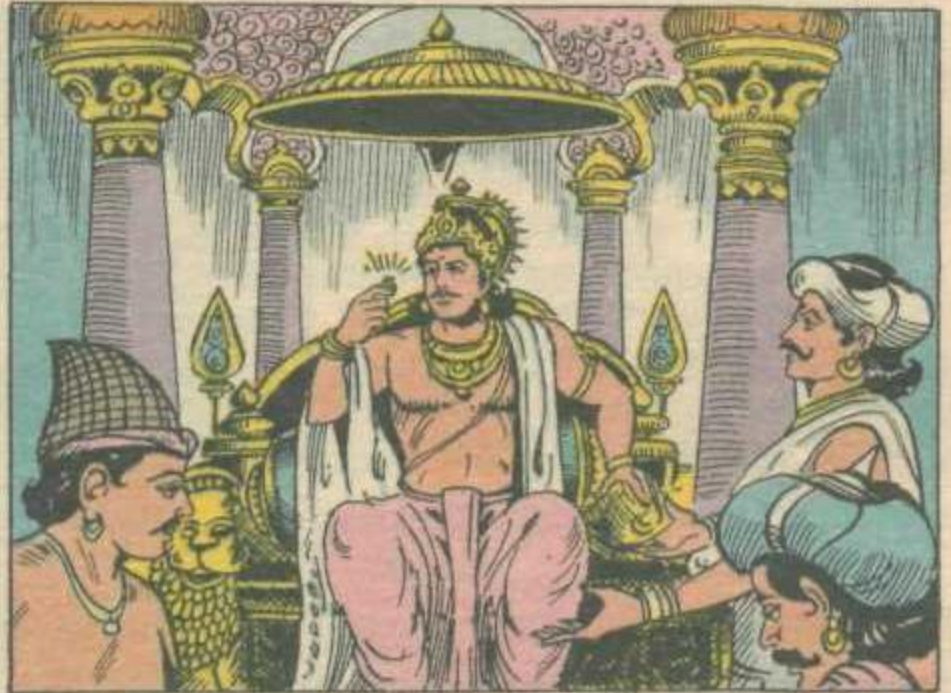


Back in his hut, he handed it over to his wife. When she cut the fish, pop fell from it a beautiful gold ring! Great was the joy of the fisherman couple! They must sell it for a good price!



The fisherman carried the ring to a goldsmith for selling it. The goldsmith looked at it with great keenness and then he looked at the fisherman with suspicion. He could not believe that the fellow found it inside a fish!

Soon the fisherman was produced before the king—along with the ring and the goldsmith. The officer who brought them said that the fisherman must have stolen the ring from a noble household. The king took the ring in his hand.



As soon as the king saw the ring, all about Shakuntala flashed in his memory. The spell Sage Durva-sa's curse had cast was over. He sent the fisherman away, giving him a reward, and felt shocked over his own conduct towards Shakuntala.

The king's emissary went to look for Shakuntala at Sage Kanva's hermitage, but she was not to be found there. Thereafter the anxious king despatched his men in all directions in search of Shakuntala.



The king became a very sad man. One day, while wandering in a forest, he was amazed to see a young boy playing with some lion-cubs. The longer he observed the scene, the more fascinated he became.

He got off his horse and called the boy and talked to him. He was charmed by the boy's innocence, behaviour and smartness. Soon the boy too took a liking for him and led him to his dwelling.





Shakuntala could not believe her eyes when her son, Bharata, presented King Dushyanta before her. She burst into tears. But, of course, she knew that the strange forgetfulness of the king was due to Sage Durvasa's curse.

With due honour Shakuntala was brought to the royal palace and was enthroned as the queen of Hastinapura. King Dushyanta was a happy man once again. He ruled his prosperous kingdom in peace for many years.



Bharata succeeded him. Legend says that he became a great ruler. All the kings of India loved him and accepted him as their monarch and India got its name *Bharatavarsha* after his name.

THE END



THE MAGIC TREE

In days gone by the kingdom of Vijaypur was ruled by King Vishnuvardhan. His son, Crown Prince Shrivardhan, was a young man with a scholarly bent of mind. In the palace there were many old manuscripts. He loved to read them.

One day he came across an old diary of his great-grandfather. Among other things, it spoke about a magic tree in the forest. Such was the virtue of the tree that standing under it one could change one's own form to any other form one desired!

The diary gave hints about the location of the tree. Prince Shrivardhan became eager to find the tree. He wandered in the forest for days together and at last found the tree. His joy knew no bounds!

Next day, while he was en-

joying a stroll in his garden his eyes fell on the general's wife. She looked sad.

"What's the matter with you, aunty?" asked the prince.

"Well, as you know, my husband has been sent to Ranipur on business of state. My son was in the habit of eating with him. For the last two days, he has been refusing to eat!" said the general's wife.

Shrivardhan was taken up by an idea. He galloped into the forest and stood under the magic tree and wished to assume the general's form. His wish was fulfilled instantly.

Coming back to town he went to the general's house and knocked on the door. The general's son burst into cheers at his sight. Both sat down to partake of food.

Just then the real general



returned home. From far he had observed that his servant was staring at him. Then the servant ran into the house and came out once again to look agape at him.

The general thought that the servant had gone mad. But when he stepped into his house, he understood the cause of the servant's bewilderment. Inside sat another man, looking like himself, and putting his son to sleep. The general pounced upon the prince and began to thrash him. The prince requested him to wait a minute and then told him everything. The general at first would not believe him. But the prince led him to the

magic tree and changed back into his own form. Only then the general accepted the truth and apologised to the prince.

A few days passed. One day the prince, disguised as a commoner, was walking through the town when he heard a couple quarrelling. The wife was telling the husband, "How much longer must we wait for our daughter's wedding?"

"As soon as Ramdas is back, we will be in a position to perform the ceremony," said the husband.

"O God! When will this Ramdas be back!" exclaimed the wife and broke down.

The prince took pity on her. If the return of some fellow named Ramdas was the only condition for their daughter's marriage, why not he pose as Ramdas? He went to the tree and became Ramdas and returned to the couple's house.

"Here he comes at last!" cried the couple. "Come on, give us back the money with interest, brother! Our daughter's marriage cannot be delayed any more!"

"Money? What money?" asked the prince with surprise.

At his question the lady

of the house turned to her husband and wailed, "I knew he will deceive us. You lent him all we had—ten thousand rupees! You believed him when he said that he will give you fifteen thousand on his return from his business trip. Now look, everything is gone!"

The couple's young son came rushing with a stick and began to beat the prince. Some neighbours gathered and stopped the young man and then led all of them to the minister. The prince wanted to talk to the minister in confidence. The minister conceded his request. The prince then disclosed who he really was. Like the general, the minister too could not believe him. Both went into the forest. Under the magic tree, the prince got back his own appearance. The minister was amazed.

Something unexpected happened after a few days. Part of the treasure was stolen from the palace though it was practically impossible for anyone to enter the rooms where the royal treasure was kept. That is why all were puzzled.

It was observed that the thief had tried to take away many things, but had succeeded in taking only some of them. The



other things he had left at the door.

The prince suspected that the thief will strike again. In the evening he went into the forest and, under the magic tree, changed into a dog. He lay behind a palace pillar at night. As he had anticipated, the burglar opened a secret passage and entered the palace. The prince was surprised. Because the keys for that passage were only with three persons, the king, the crown prince and the general. When the thief was about to sneak away, the prince, as the dog, charged at him. The thief threw a stone at him and ran



away. Outside the castle his horse waited for him. The thief galloped away.

The prince, in the form of the dog he had become, pursued him. The thief went straight to the magic tree and changed into his real form. What the prince suspected was found to be true. He was none other than the general.

Once the general went away, the prince too changed into his true form and returned to the palace.

Back at the palace he was surprised to hear that his father, the king, was missing! While all were anxious and excited, the

king returned.

"My son," he said, "I have decided to build a new palace elsewhere. I propose to clear a part of the forest and begin construction there."

"Why this sudden decision, my lord?" asked the prince.

"It is because of a dream," said the king, but he did not elaborate. An hour later he led a number of workers into the forest. The prince also got ready to accompany him.

"You need not come, my son!" said the king. The prince was intrigued. He wanted to talk to the minister. But the minister was not seen anywhere.

He was beset with certain doubts. He followed the king's party, stealthily. The king led the workers to the site of the magic tree. "Cut this one first!" he ordered. Immediately the workers began hacking at it.

"Stop! Stop!" shouted the prince.

"Who asked you to follow us?" demanded the king angrily. Then he ordered his bodyguards to take hold of the prince. "My son has gone mad!" he told them.

Meanwhile the tree fell with a crashing sound. Lo and behold,



as soon as the tree fell, the king changed into the minister.

"Arrest the minister!" shouted the prince. The bodyguards immediately executed his order, because, next to the king's the crown prince's commands were to be followed.

The minister confessed to having kidnapped the old king. He led them to a cave and the king was rescued. Once the minister had known the secret of the magic tree, he had wanted to pass himself as the real king. Once he had changed

into the king's form, he had wanted to destroy the tree so that the prince or anybody else would not be able to take advantage of it. Little did he know that once the tree is gone, the magic too would go!

The prince then told the secret of the tree to his father. Said the king, "My son, I too had read that book. But I never tried to locate the tree, for I knew that such things can be both a blessing and a curse!"

The general and the minister were thrown in jail.

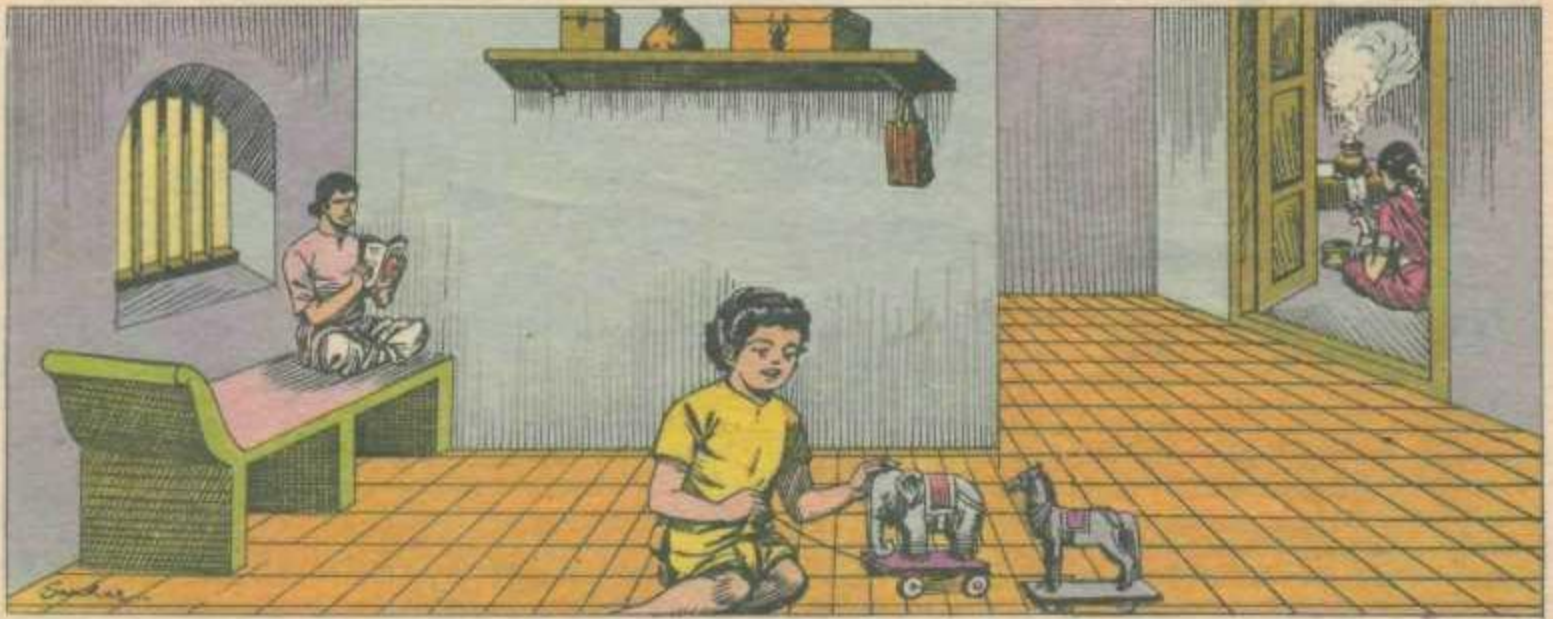
Raman: How is your cold, Suresh?

Suresh: Very obstinate.

Raman: How is your son?

Suresh: The same.





THE STORM

It was a Sunday. It was not necessary for Nandlal to go to his office. He sat down with a novel.

Hours passed. His wife Asha was busy cooking. His little son, Kittu, was playing on the floor.

Suddenly the boy began to cry.

"Will you please take the child out into the garden for a while? He must be feeling bored," said Asha.

Nandlal made no response. He kept on turning leaves of the novel.

"Don't you hear the boy crying?" Asha asked.

"I do. But don't you hear the thunderclaps outside? It can scare anybody; and the dazzling lightning might blind anybody, what to speak of our little Kittu!" said Nandlal.

A few minutes passed. Kittu's whimpering did not stop. Asha shouted at Nandlal once again, asking him to take the child out for a brief walk.

"Impossible. How can I brave the rains? Don't you see that it is raining cats and dogs?" said Nandlal.

Asha did not say a word more. She took Kittu into the kitchen and, after a while,



opened the door and left him on the balcony. He had stopped crying.

When Nandlal finished reading his novel, he looked around him. There was bright sunlight everywhere. Not even a patch of cloud was to be seen in the sky.

"I'm sorry," he told Asha, "I was so engrossed in the description of a storm in this novel that I forgot there was all the time a bright sunlight outside!"

Asha only smiled. "Very well, come for lunch, now that you have passed through such a storm!" she said.

FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS

A young man was recruited to the fold of an old gang of burglars. The very first night he entered a housing colony, he was captured. After his release from jail, his leader asked him, "Fool, did you not hear the burglar alarm somebody who spotted you rang? The bell rang for five minutes and then the residents caught you. Why did you not flee as soon as you heard the alarm?"

"Babu, I thought the alarm was for the residents, not for me!"



THE PROFESSOR'S COURTESY

The class was over. The students dispersed. But the professor was still looking for something on the table and on the chair. He opened the drawer several times.

"Did you misplace something, Sir?" asked Shanti, the last student to leave the room.

"Yes, as it was very hot today, I took off my coat and my necktie!" said the professor apologetically. "But while I put on the coat, I don't know what I did to my necktie!"

Shanti giggled. "Sir, haven't you already put it on?"

The professor found it to be so. He was pleased and he thanked Shanti. But, while getting into his car, he felt that a mere thanks was not enough and he should say something more. He stopped and said, "It is so good you pointed it out. Otherwise I would have gone home without it!"



THREE APPLES AND STILL SINGULAR?

The little girl who has found fault with her teacher because the teacher corrected her 'fruits' to a mere 'fruit', even when she clearly wrote that she had eaten three apples, is a bit agitated.

Well, dear Miss X, you can eat three apples and still you would have eaten 'fruit' and not fruits. The usage in this case is, whatever be their number, the edible produce of a tree of one variety is called 'fruit'. "All the fruit of this tree are perfect." In a general way also we can say, "He is growing fruit in his farm" when we mean that he is growing several kinds of fruit.

But you can say, "The market abounded in apples, oranges, grapes and other fruits." Then there is a figurative use of the word in plural: "We are enjoying the fruits of the freedom-fighters' hard work!"

Another word which often misleads students regarding its plural form is 'deer'. Its singular and plural forms are the same. You can say, "I saw an excellent deer in the park." You can also say, "There are a large number of deer in the park."

The same law applies to 'sheep'. You can also say 'fish' in plural, though 'fishes' cannot be declared wrong!





LET US KNOW

What is superconductivity?

—S. Venkatesh,
Bombay.

"Property of extremely low electrical resistance acquired by certain metals at temperatures approaching absolute zero." (*A Compact Science Dictionary*, edited by G. E. Speck.)

Is there any country in the world where everybody is literate?

—Shrish Talukdar,
Midnapore.

There is Iceland.

Who was the king of Kalinga during the famous Kalinga War transforming Ashoka into a pious man?

—Richard Mahapatra,
Sambalpur.

It is not known who was the king. All that is known is he was an able king who could offer very stiff resistance to Ashoka.

Who invented the Volleyball game?

—V. V. Khandelwal,
Delhi.

An American, W. G. Morgan is given the credit for formulating the game in 1819. Of course, many changes have been made since then.

What is Insular Climate?

—Rita Das,
Jamshedpur.

The kind of climate that prevails on islands or on coastal regions where the sea is the dominating influence. Temperature in such climates varies with a small range.

(In view of the large number of questions received, we can answer only one question from one reader.)

PHOTO CAPTION CONTEST



P.V. Subramanyam



S.G. Seshagiri

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PICKS FROM THE WISE

A fool must now and then be right by chance.

—William Cowper

All cruelty springs from weakness.

—Seneca

A man convinced against his will is not convinced.

—Laurence J. Peter.



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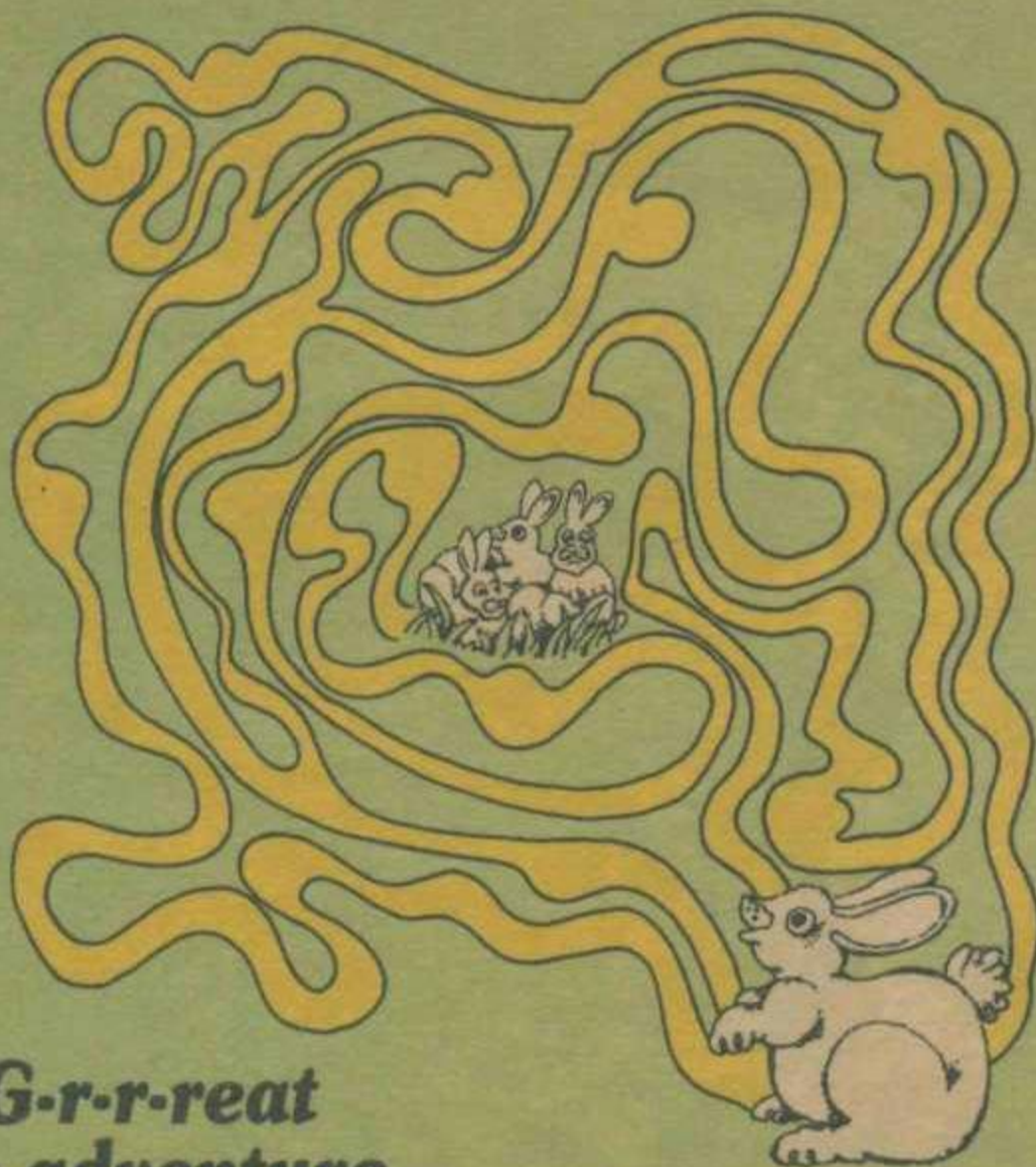
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